



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

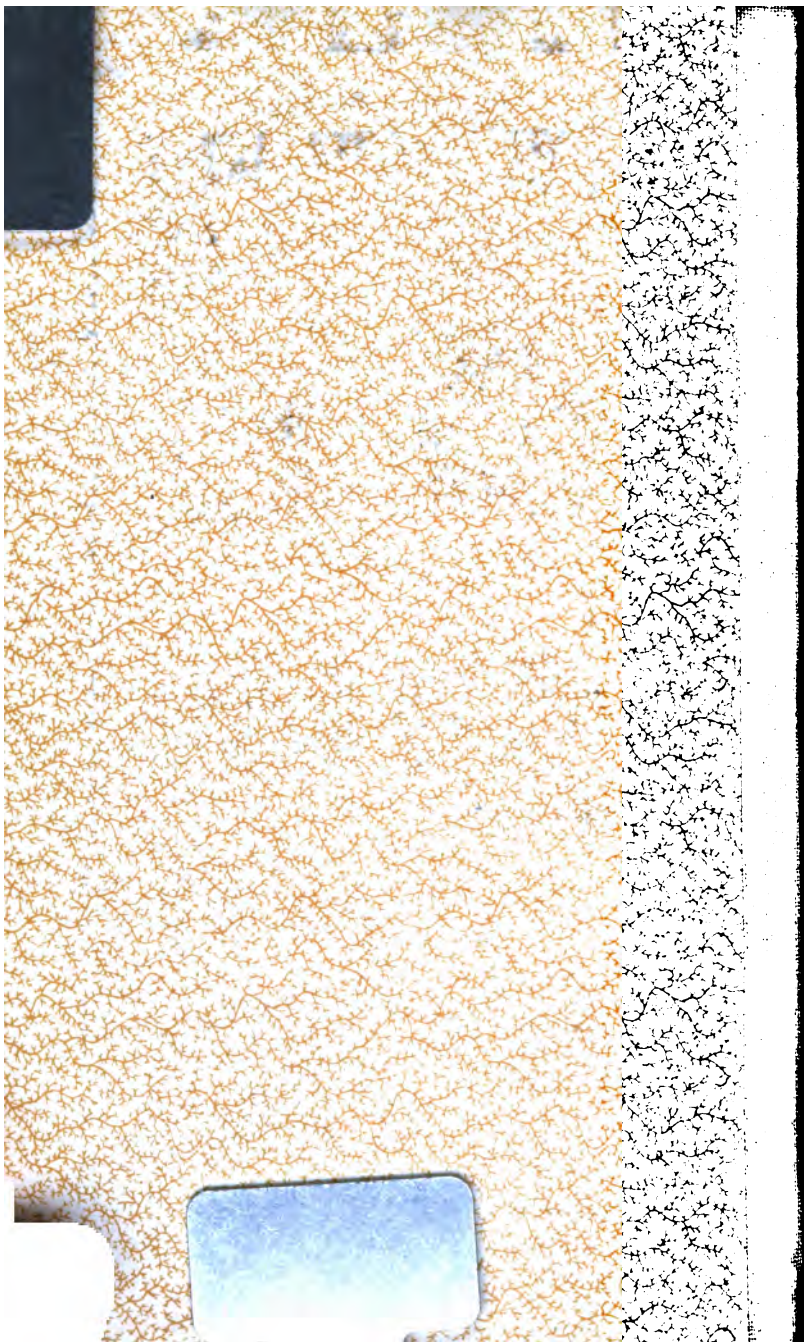
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

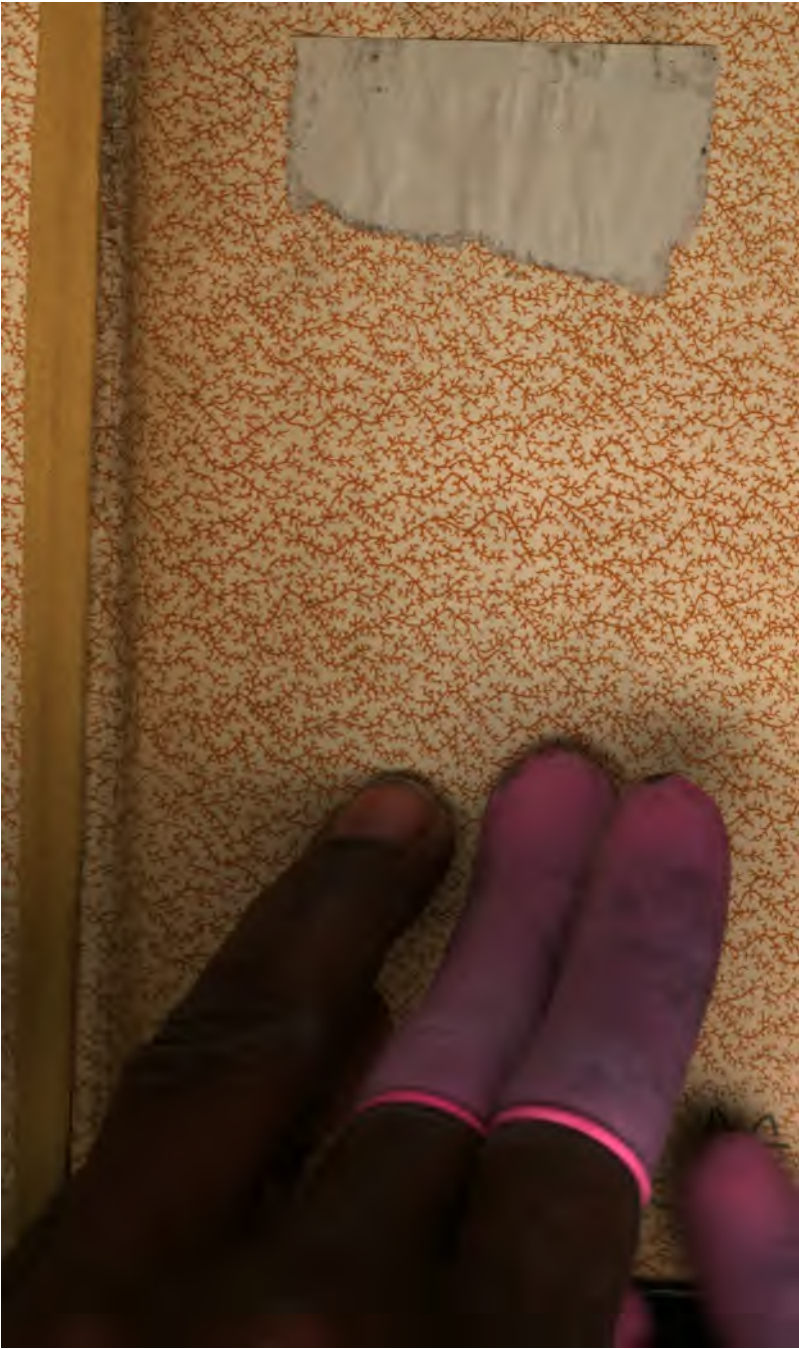
We also ask that you:

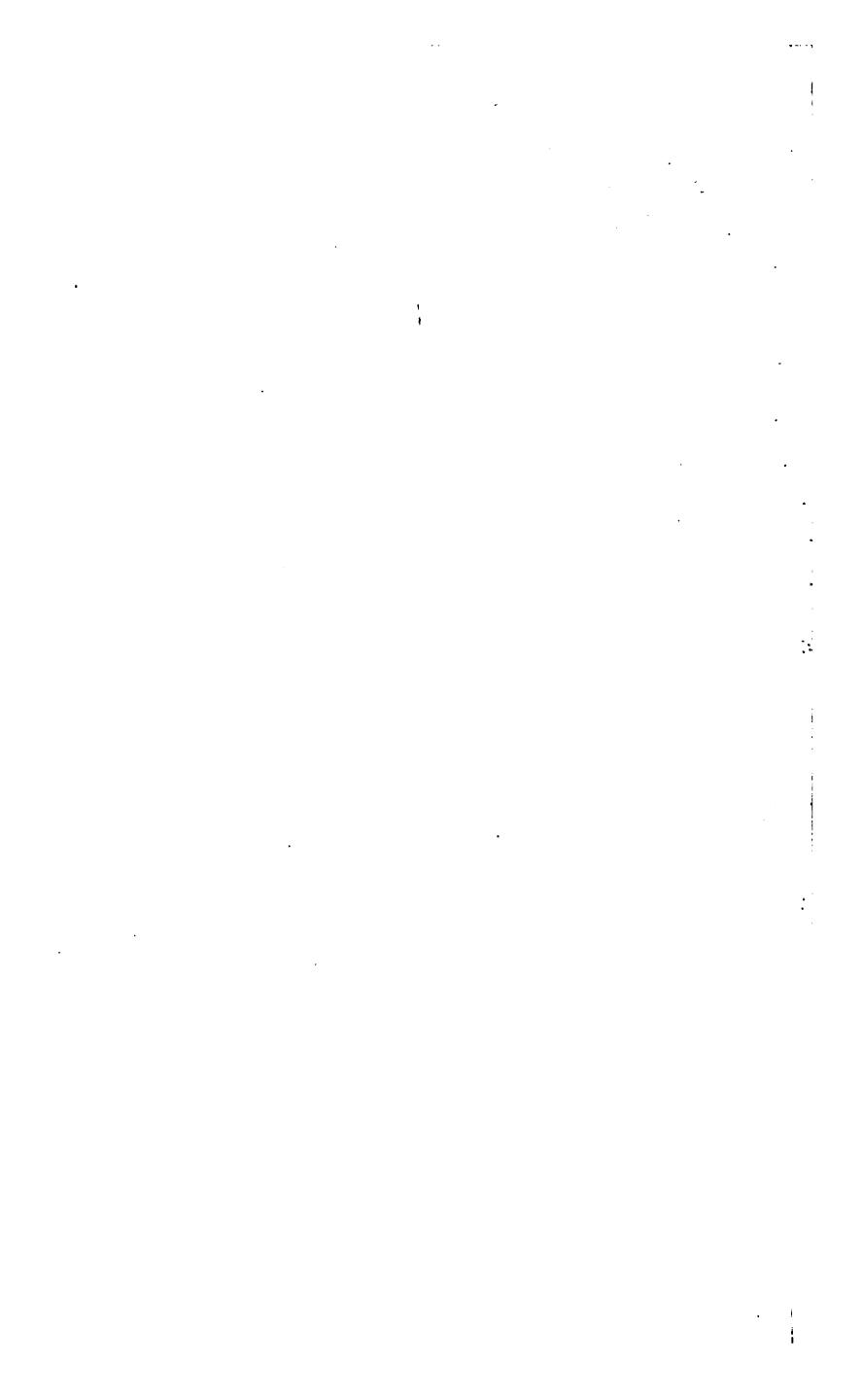
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







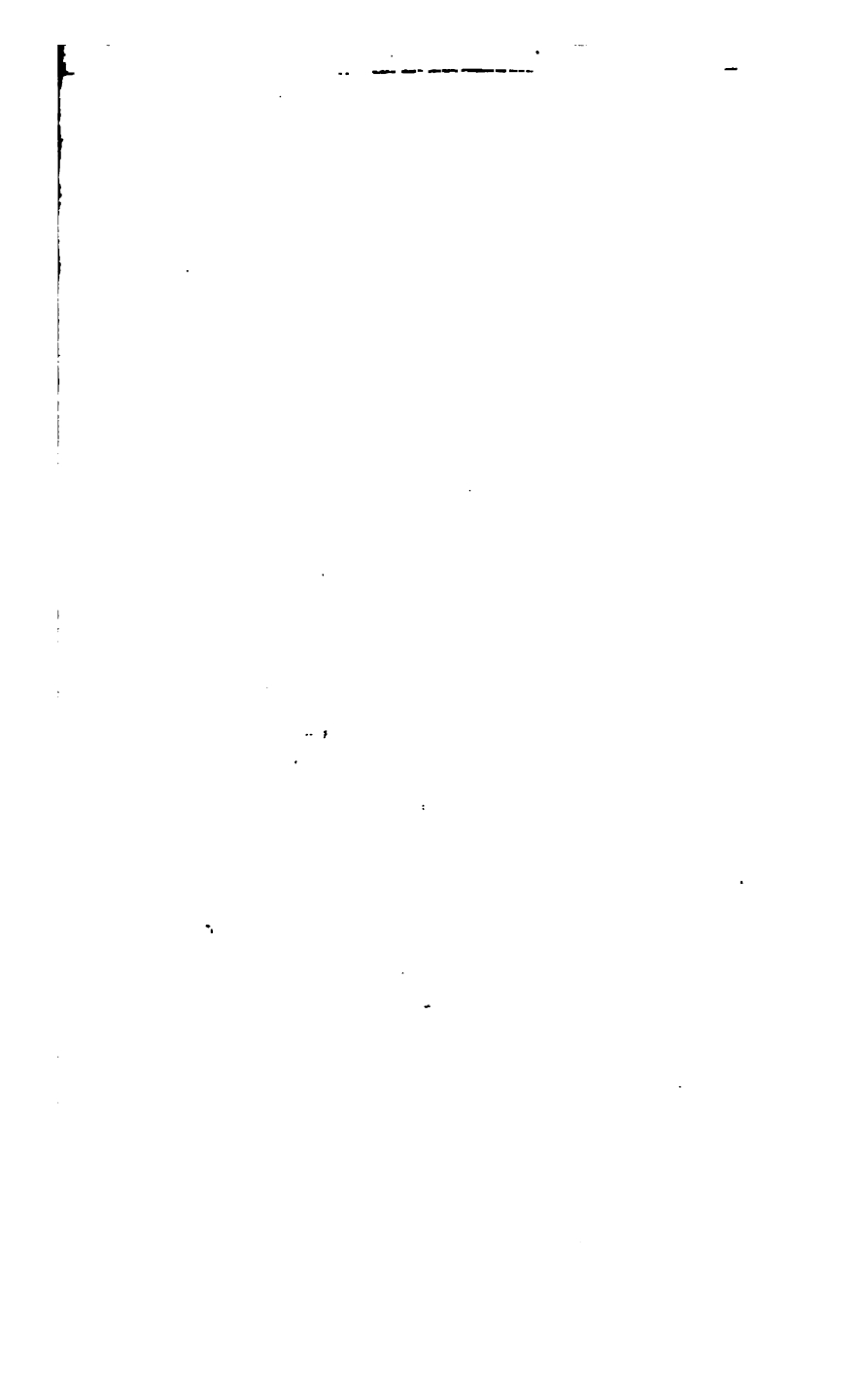


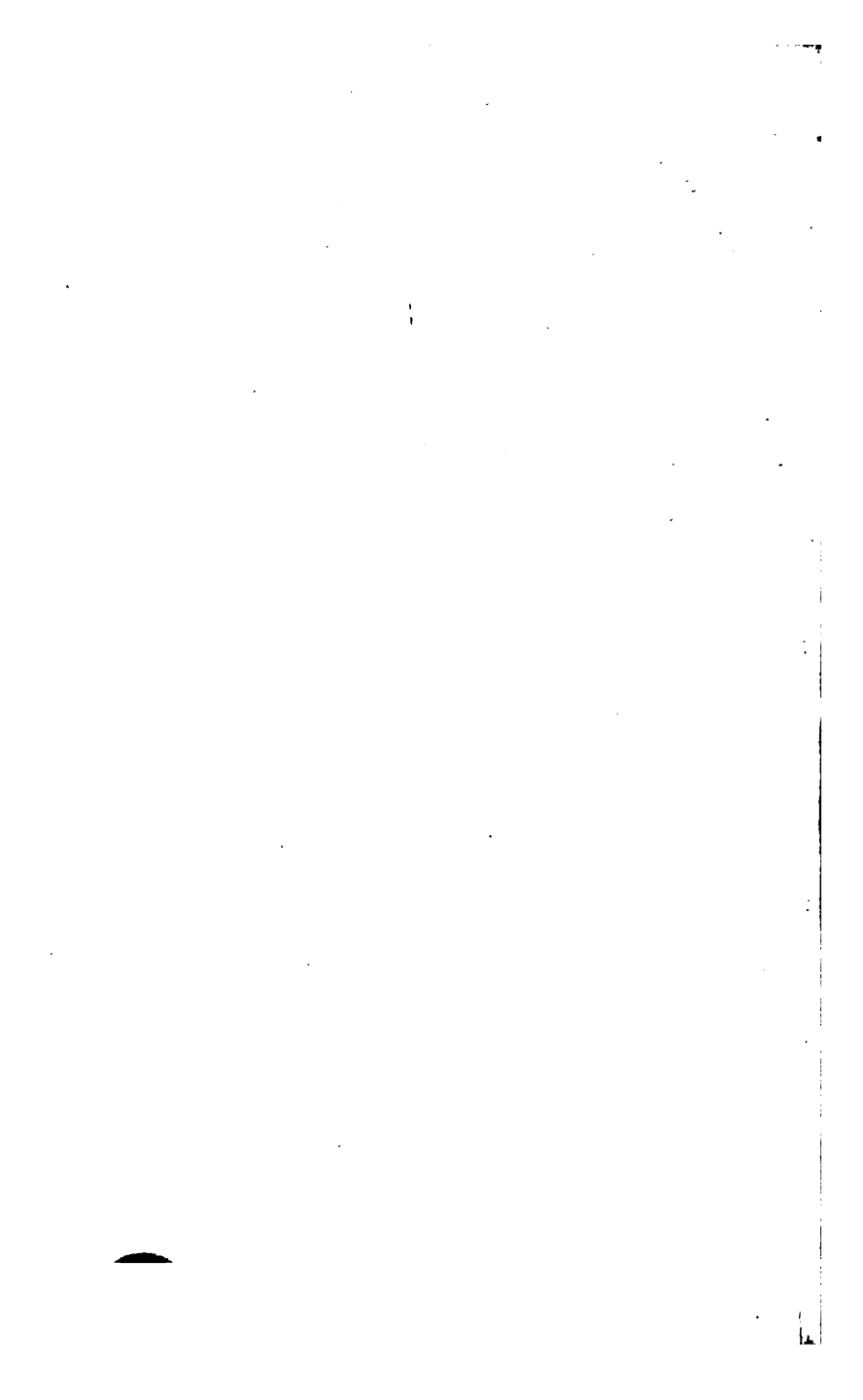
NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



SEBASTIAN CABOT.





THE

(SCHOOL LIBRARY)

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION

of the

Board of Education

OF THE STATE OF

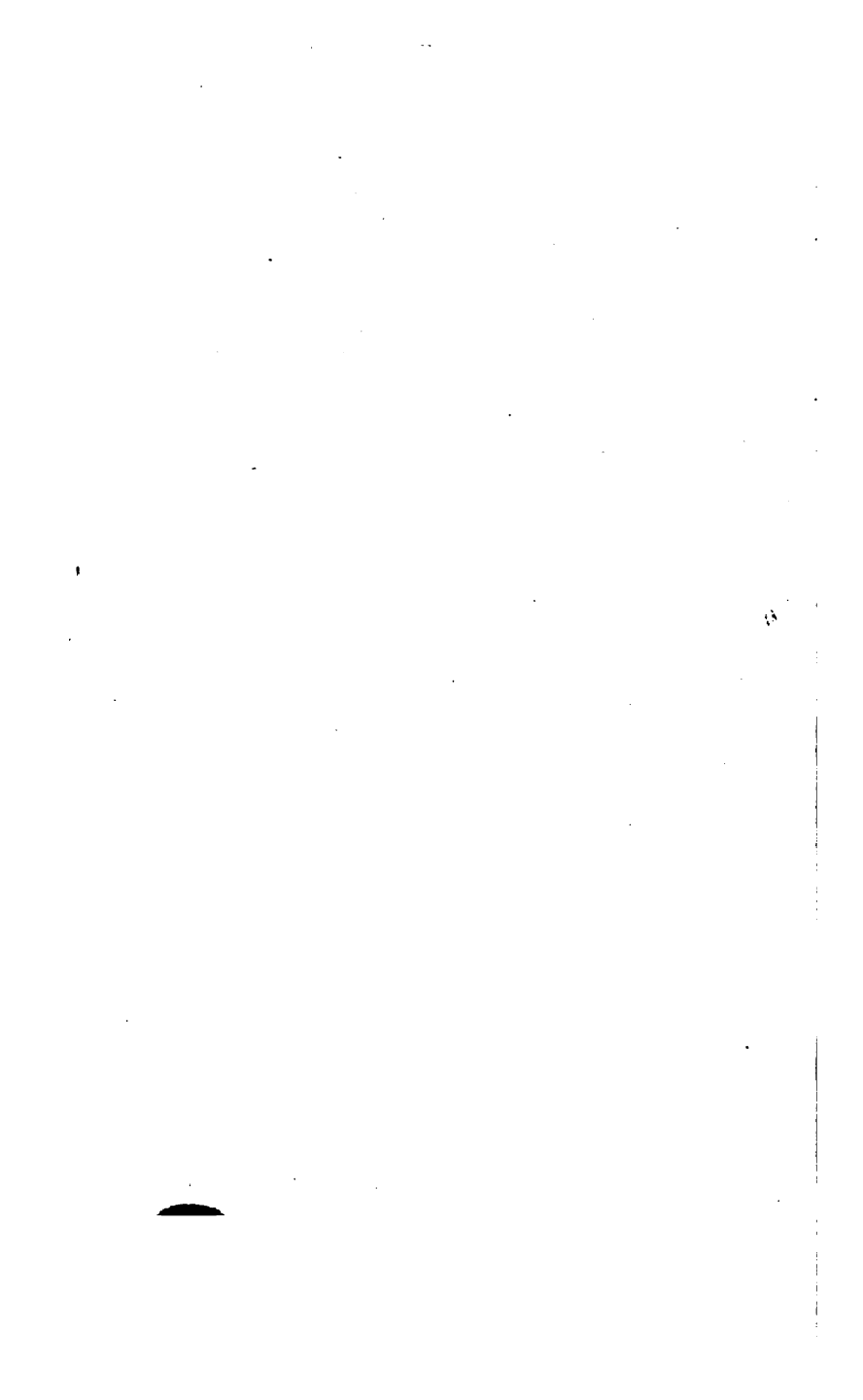
MASSACHUSETTS.



BOSTON.

MARSH, CAPEN, LYON & WEBB

Copy right Secured

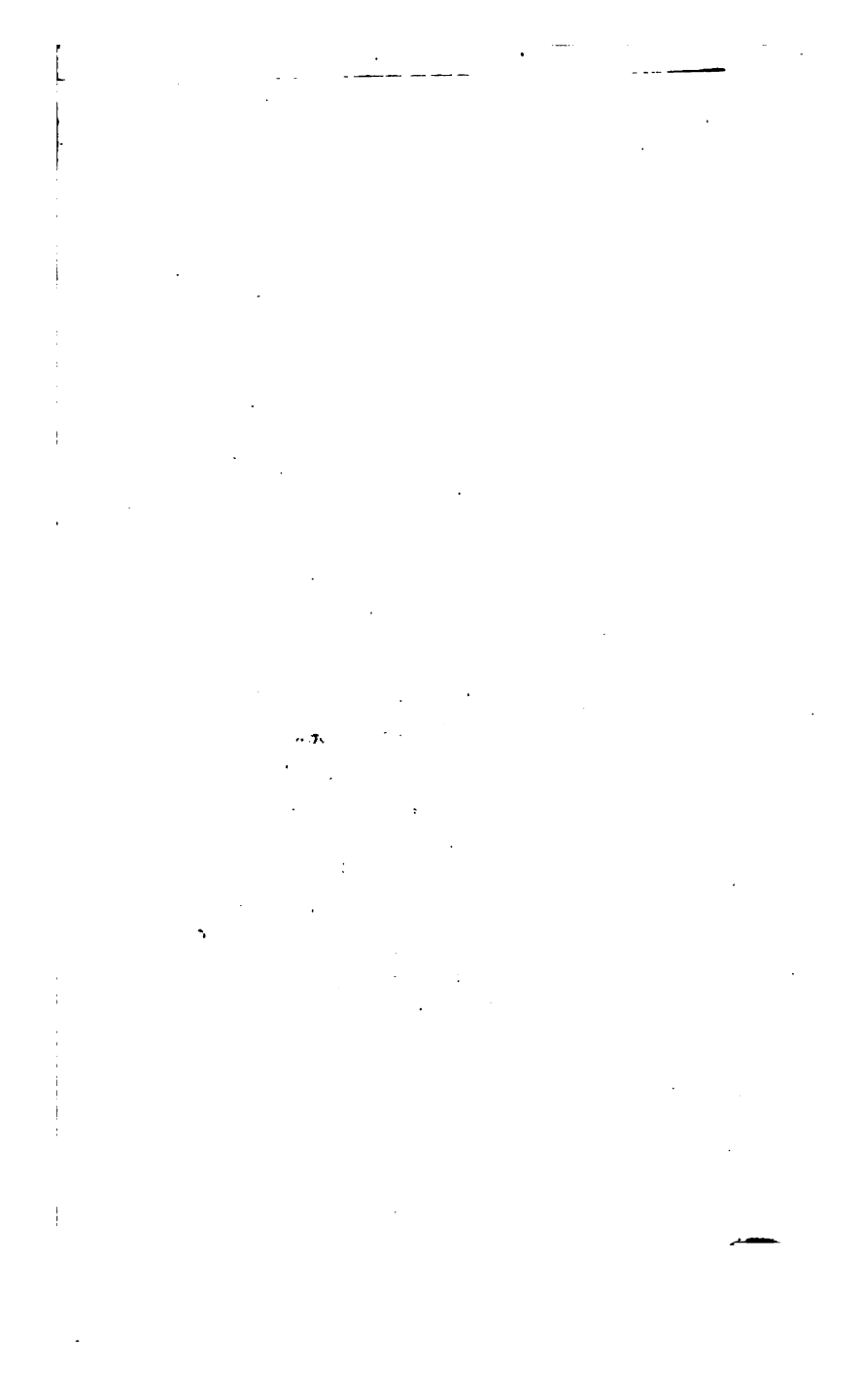


NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



SEBASTIAN CABOT.





THE

SCHOOL LIBRARY

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION

of the

Board of Education

OF THE STATE OF

MASSACHUSETTS.

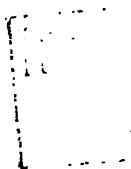


BOSTON.

MARSH, CAPEN, LYON & WEBB

Copyright Secured.

WYOM V30
JL804
V7A80U



THE
SCHOOL LIBRARY.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

VOL. V.

LIVES OF EMINENT INDIVIDUALS,

CELEBRATED IN

AMERICAN HISTORY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BOSTON:
MARSH, CAPEN, LYON, AND WEBB.

1839.

JUN
4/5

247081

NOV 10 1891
JUN 10 1891
JUN 10 1891

THIS VOLUME IS SANCTIONED, BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS, AS ONE OF THE SERIES, ENTITLED, 'THE SCHOOL LIBRARY,' PUBLISHED BY MARSH, CAPEN, LYON, AND WEBB.

EDWARD EVERETT,
GEORGE HULL,
EMERSON DAVIS,
EDMUND DWIGHT,
GEORGE PUTNAM,
ROBERT RANTOUL, JR.,
THOMAS ROBBINS,
JARED SPARKS,
CHARLES HUDSON,
GEORGE N. BRIGGS.

Jared Sparks

71612

LIVES

OF

EMINENT INDIVIDUALS,

CELEBRATED IN

AMERICAN HISTORY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

LIVES OF ETHAN ALLEN, SEBASTIAN CABOT, HENRY
HUDSON, JOSEPH WARREN, ISRAEL PUTNAM,
AND DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

BOSTON ·
MARSH, CAPEN, LYON, AND WEBB.

1839.

57c
118

247081

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1839, by
MARSH, CAPEN, LYON, AND WEBB,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

EDUCATION PRESS.

CONTENTS.

LIFE OF MAJOR-GENERAL ETHAN ALLEN ;	Page
By JARED SPARKS,	1

LIFE OF SEBASTIAN CABOT ;	
By CHARLES HAYWARD, JR.,	85
Preface,	87

CHAPTER I.

Cabot's Birth and Youth.—Henry the Seventh grants a Patent for the Discovery of a Northwest Passage.—Discovery of the American Continent.—Cabot penetrates Hudson's Bay.—Failure of Provisions and Objections of his Crew.—Returns to England.—Second Patent.—Death of John Cabot.—Second Voyage to America.—Attempts to colonize Labrador.—Fails to discover a Northwest Passage.—Dissatisfaction of Colonists.—His Return to England.—Injustice of Henry the Seventh.—Cabot quits his Service,	89
---	-----------

CHAPTER II.

Henry the Eighth.—Ferdinand of Spain invites Cabot to his Service.—Cabot stationed at Seville.—Council of the Indies.—Death of Ferdinand.—Cabot returns to England.—Expedition of 1517.—Sir Thomas Pert the Cause of its Failure.—Cabot recalled to Spain, by Charles the Fifth.—Appointed Pilot-Major of Spain.—Expedition to the Moluccas.—Council of Badajos.—Jealousy of the Portuguese.—Diego Garcia.—Martin Mendez.—The Brothers Rojas,	98
--	-----------

CHAPTER III.

Cabot sails to the Canaries, and thence to the Cape de Verds.—Disaffection of Mendez and the Rojas.—Mutiny.—Cabot enters the River La Plata.—Annoyed by the Natives.—Enters the Paraná and the Paraguay.—Three Spaniards seized, and a violent Contest ensues.—The Party harassed by Diego Garcia, who overtakes Cabot at Santa Aña, and claims the Right of Discovery.—Cabot resists.—Garcia leaves the Country.—Cabot sends a Messenger to Spain, and determines to conquer Peru.—The Emperor's Pecuniary Embarrassments when He receives the Report.—Cabot explores the La Plata.—Quarrel between the Followers of Cabot and Garcia.—Capture of Sanctus Spiritus.—The Adventurers return to Spain, 105

CHAPTER IV.

Cabot's Reception in Spain.—Resumes the Office of Pilot-Major.—Account of a Personal Interview with Cabot.—His private Character.—Relinquishes his Office and returns to England.—Edward the Sixth.—Charles the Fifth requests Him to return to Spain.—His Occupations in England.—Errors with Regard to the Knighting of the Cabots, 116

CHAPTER V.

Magnetic Variation.—Cabot's Early Observations.—Explains his Theory in Public to the King.—Bad Condition of English Commerce.—Cabot consulted.—His Remedy.—Opposed by 'The Stilyard.'—Nature of that Corporation.—Remonstrances laid before the Privy Council.—The Stilyard broken up.—Preparations for Expeditions to the North.—Cabot furnishes the Instructions.—A Part of the Squadron under Chancellor reaches Russia.—Chancellor's Personal Interview with the Emperor.—The Adventurers obtain a Charter.—Change in Cabot's Fortune.—King Edward's Death.—Queen Mary.—Cabot's Pension suspended for two Years.—Characteristic Anecdote.—Cabot resigns his Pension.—His Death, 123

LIFE OF HENRY HUDSON ; BY HENRY R. CLEVELAND,	135
--	------------

CHAPTER I.

Hudson's Early History little known.—First Voyage, in 1607.—Sails from Gravesend.—Makes Discoveries on the Coast of Greenland.—Sails thence to Spitzbergen.—Proceeds Northward, to the Eighty-second Degree of Latitude.—Attempts to find a Passage around the North of Greenland.—Driven back by the Ice.—Returns to the Southern Parts of Spitzbergen, and thence to England,	137
--	------------

CHAPTER II.

Hudson's Second Voyage.—Sails from London with the Design of seeking a Northeastern Passage to India.—Passes the North Cape.—Obstructed by Ice.—Arrives at Nova Zembla.—Abandons the Hope of going further North.—Explores an Inlet, or River, in Nova Zembla.—Resolves to return.—Searches for Willoughby's Land.—Extract from Willoughby's Journal.—Hudson arrives in England,	144
---	------------

CHAPTER III.

Hudson's Third Voyage.—He seeks Employment from the Dutch East India Company.—Sails from Amsterdam.—Disappointed in the Hope of passing through the Vaygats.—Sails Westward, to the Bank of Newfoundland, and thence to the Coast of America.—Enters Penobscot Bay.—Intercourse with the Natives.—Sails to Cape Cod, and explores the Coast to the Southward.—Returns to the North.—Discovers the Outlet of Hudson's River, and anchors in New York Bay,	150
---	------------

CHAPTER IV.

Hudson explores the River which now bears his Name.—Escape of the Hostages.—Strange Experiment with the Natives.—Anchors near the present Site

- of Albany.—Returns down the River.—Battle with the Natives, near Hoboken.—Sails from the Bay, and leaves America.—Arrives in England, . . . 158

CHAPTER V.

- Hudson's Fourth Voyage.—He engages in the Service of the London Company.—Sails to Iceland.—Disturbances among his Crew.—Advances Westward.—In Great Danger from the Ice.—Enters and explores Hudson's Bay.—Unsuccessful in the Search for a Western Passage.—Determines to Winter in the Bay, 165

CHAPTER VI.

- Dreary Prospect for the Winter.—Disturbances and Sufferings of the Crew.—Unexpected Supply of Provisions.—Distress from Famine.—Hudson sails from his Wintering-Place.—Mutiny of Greene and Others.—Fate of Hudson and Eight of the Crew.—Fate of Greene and Others of the Mutineers.—Return of the Vessel to England, 171

-
- LIFE OF MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH WARREN ;
By ALEXANDER H. EVERETT, 183

CHAPTER I.

- His Family and Education, 185

CHAPTER II.

- His Professional Studies and Practice.—Entrance into Political Life, 188

CHAPTER III.

- Events of the 5th of March, 1770.—Warren's Anniversary Addresses, 192

CHAPTER IV.

- Political Organization of Massachusetts.—Warren is elected President of the Provincial Congress, and Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety.—Events of the 19th of April, 1775, 197

CHAPTER V.

- Formation and Character of the New England Army.—Warren is elected Major-general.—Gridley.—Prescott.—Putnam, 203

CHAPTER VI.

- Strength and Disposition of the British Troops.—The Americans occupy the Heights of Charlestown, . . . 209

CHAPTER VII.

- Commencement of the Action of the 17th of June.—The British open their Batteries upon the American Works.—The Americans send for Reinforcements, and are joined by the New Hampshire Troops under Colonels Stark and Reed, . . . 215

CHAPTER VIII.

- Progress of the Action.—A Detachment of British Troops lands at Charlestown.—View of the two Peninsulas and the neighboring Country.—General Warren comes upon the Field, 220

CHAPTER IX.

- General Howe attempts to storm the American Works.—He is repulsed with Great Loss.—Ill Conduct of the American Artillery.—Gridley.—Gerrish.—Callender, 224

CHAPTER X.

- Conflagration of Charlestown.—General Howe attempts a Second Time to storm the American

- Works.—He is again repulsed with Great Loss.
 —Anecdote of General Putnam and Major Small
 of the British Army, 228

CHAPTER XI.

- Third Attack upon the American Works, which proves
 successful.—The Americans leave the Redoubt.
 —Death of Warren, 231

CHAPTER XII.

- Resolutions of the Continental Congress in Honor of
 Warren.—His Wife and Family.—Concluding Re-
 flections. 236

-
- LIFE OF MAJOR-GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM ;
 BY OLIVER W. B. PEABODY, 239

CHAPTER I.

- His Birth and Education.—Becomes a Practical Far-
 mer.—Singular Adventure in killing a Wolf.—En-
 ters the Army as Captain of a Company of Rangers.
 —Engages in the War against the French and In-
 dians on the Canada Frontiers, 241

CHAPTER II.

- Raised to the Rank of Major.—Various Adventures
 in the War.—Capture of Fort William Henry.—
 Stationed near Fort Edward.—Encounters the En-
 emy at South Bay.—Expedition against Ticonde-
 roga.—Death of Lord Howe, 252

CHAPTER III.

- Perilous Descent of the Rapids at Fort Miller.—Bat-
 tle with the Indians.—Taken Prisoner and treated

with Great Cruelty.—Sent to Ticonderoga, and thence to Montreal.—Exchanged, and returns to the Army.—Colonel Schuyler.—Putnam is commissioned Lieutenant-colonel.—Serves under General Amherst.—Takes Part in the Expedition against Havana.—Engaged in an Enterprise against the Western Indians.—Retires from the Army after Ten Years' Service, 263

CHAPTER IV.

Opposes the Stamp Act.—Goes to the Mississippi River to select Lands.—His Intimacy with the British Officers in Boston.—Hastens to the Army on hearing of the Battle of Lexington.—Made a Brigadier-general of the Connecticut Troops.—Battle of Bunker's Hill, 276

CHAPTER V.

Appointed Major-general in the Continental Army.—Remains at Cambridge till the Evacuation of Boston.—Commands at New York.—Suggests a Mode of obstructing the Navigation of the Hudson, to prevent the Enemy's Vessels from ascending it.—Commands on Long Island.—New York evacuated.—Retreat through New Jersey.—Putnam stationed at Philadelphia, and afterwards at Princeton.—Anecdotes, 287

CHAPTER VI.

Commands in the Highlands.—Operations during the Campaign.—The British ascend the Hudson.—General Putnam superintends the Construction of the Fortifications at West Point.—Superseded in his Command.—Stationed in Connecticut.—Perilous Adventure at Horseneck.—Retires from the Army in Consequence of a Paralytic Attack.—His Death.—His Military and Personal Character, . . 300

LIFE OF DAVID RITTENHOUSE ; By JAMES RENWICK, LL. D.,	313
--	------------

CHAPTER I.

Introduction,	315
-------------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

His Birth and Parentage,	319
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

His Education.—Early Indications of Mechanical Genius.—Remarkable Progress in Mathematical Learning,	323
--	-----

CHAPTER IV.

His Agricultural Occupations.—Choice of a Profes- sion.—Entrance into Business.—Laborious Pursuit of his Trade and Scientific Studies.—Consequent Injury to his Health.—Becomes known as an Artist and an Astronomer.—His Marriage,	327
---	-----

CHAPTER V.

Boundary Line of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Mary- land.—Mason and Dixon's Line.—Boundary of Pennsylvania and New York,	331
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

Experiments on Expansion.—Application of them to the Pendulum.—Metallic Thermometer.—Experi- ments on the Compressibility of Water.—Adapta- tion of Planetary Machines to Clocks.—Project of an Orrery,	336
---	-----

CHAPTER VII.

Preparations for Observing the Transit of Venus, . . . 341

CHAPTER VIII.

Observation of the Transit of Venus.—Calculation of
the Parallax of the Sun, 346

CHAPTER IX.

Transit of Mercury.—Longitudes of Philadelphia and
Norriton.—Orrery resumed.—Finished, and sold
to Princeton College.—Comet of 1770, 351

CHAPTER X.

His Second Orrery.—Proposed Removal to Phila-
delphia.—Loan-Office Bill.—Gift of the Legisla-
ture.—Change of Residence.—Election as Secre-
tary of the American Philosophical Society.—Sec-
ond Marriage.—Proposed Public Observatory, . . 355

CHAPTER XI.

His Election to the Legislature of Pennsylvania.—
First Committee of Public Safety.—Treasurer of
the State.—Capture of Philadelphia, and Removal
of the Treasury to Lancaster.—Second Committee
of Public Safety.—Transit of Mercury and Solar
Eclipses, 359

CHAPTER XII.

Boundary Lines of Pennsylvania and Virginia.—Di-
vision Line of Pennsylvania and New York.—De-
marcation of Territory reserved by Massachusetts
within the State of New York, 364

CHAPTER XIII.

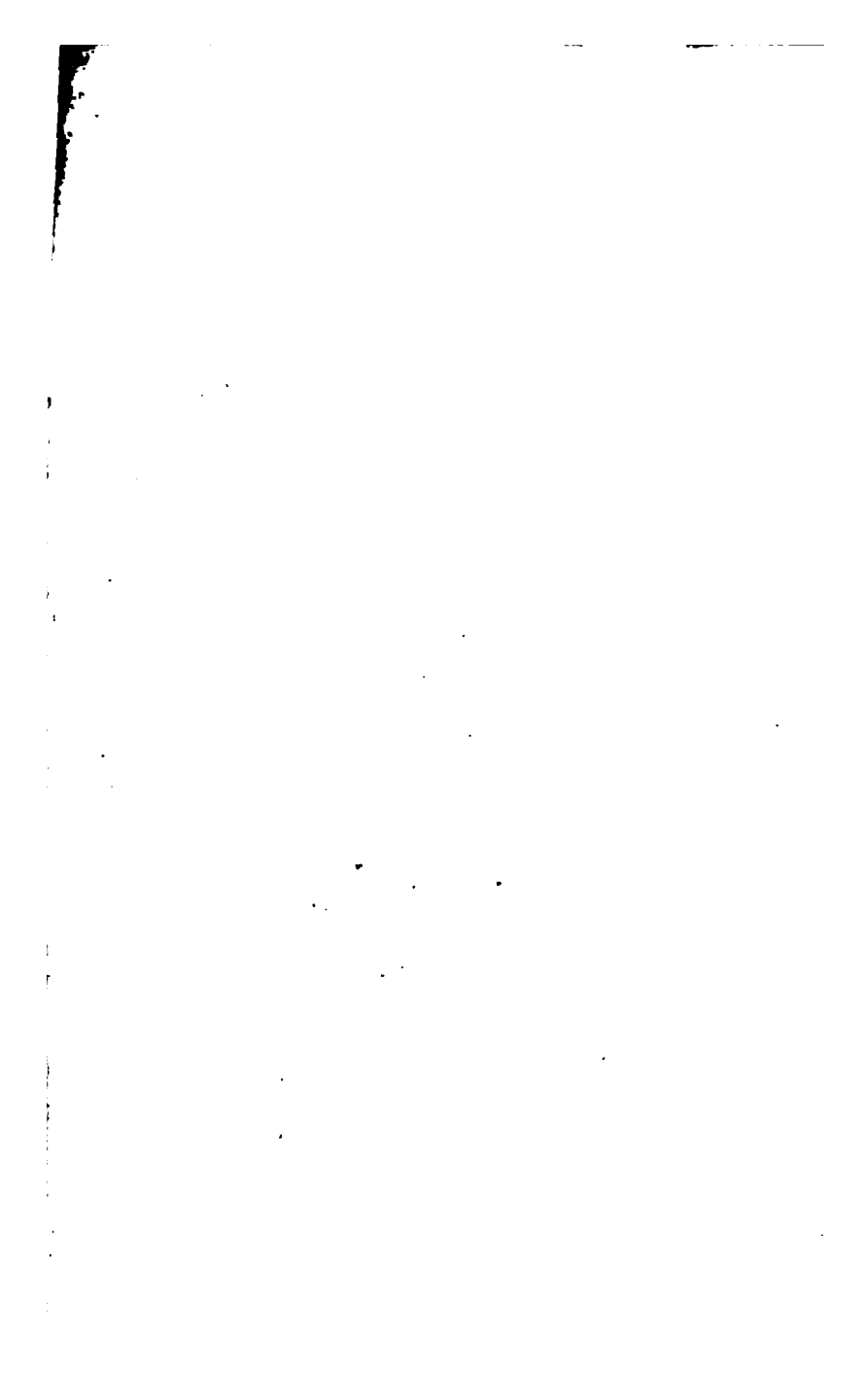
His Appointment as Trustee of the Loan-Office.—

Retirement from Office as State Treasurer.—Private Observatory.—Commissioner to organize a Bank of the United States.—Director of the Mint of the United States.—Resignation of that Office, . 368

CHAPTER XIV.

He is elected President of the Democratic Society.—Declining Health.—Death.—Character.—Literary and Scientific Honors.—Conclusion, . . . 373

GLOSSARY, 377



I am Sir with the Greatest Respect and Esteem, your
Excellency's Most Obedt. and Hum. ^{ly} Servant Ethan Allen
Birmingham 6th March. 1779 per -
His Excellency General Washington -

I am Gent your most Obedt
Servant
Ethan Allen

Frank Pitman

I am, Dear Sir, with the sincerest affection
and esteem, your most obed^t & fervent

Dear Rottenhouse



I am Sir with the Greatest Respect and Esteem, your
 Ever Obedient Moot & Obed. W. J. D. H. J. M. M.

LIFE
OF
ETHAN ALLEN;
BY
JARED SPARKS.

II.

1

V.



ETHAN ALLEN.

THE first settlement of Vermont, and the early struggles of the inhabitants not only in subduing a wilderness, but establishing an independent government, afford some of the most remarkable incidents in American history. When we now survey that flourishing state, presenting in all its parts populous towns and villages, and witness the high degree of culture to which it has attained, and which, under the most favored social organization, is usually the slow achievement of time, we can hardly realize that seventy years ago the whole region from the Connecticut River to Lake Champlain was a waste of forests, an asylum for wild beasts, and a barrier against the inroads of the savages upon the border settlers of the New England colonies. This change has been brought to pass in the first place by a bold and hardy enterprise, and an indomitable spirit of freedom, which have rarely been equalled; and afterwards by the steady perseverance of an enlightened and industrious population, deriving its stock from the surrounding states, and increasing rapidly from its own resources. To the historian, this is a fertile and attractive theme. By the biographer, it can only be touched, as bearing on the deeds and character of the persons, who have been the principal actors in the train of events.

Among those, who were most conspicuous in laying the foundation upon which the independent state of Vermont has been reared, and indeed the leader and champion of that resolute band of husbandmen, who first planted themselves in the wilderness of the Green Mountains, was ETHAN ALLEN. He was a native of Connecticut, where his father and mother were likewise born, the former

in Coventry, and the latter in Woodbury. Joseph Allen, the father, after his marriage with Mary Baker, resided in Litchfield, where it is believed that Ethan and one or two other children were born. The parents afterwards removed to Cornwall, where other children were born, making in all six sons and two daughters, Ethan, Heman, Heber, Levi, Zimri, Ira, Lydia, and Lucy. All the brothers grew up to manhood, and four or five of them emigrated to the territory west of the Green Mountains among the first settlers, and were prominent members of the social and political compacts into which the inhabitants gradually formed themselves. Bold, active, and enterprising, they espoused with zeal, and defended with energy, the cause of the settlers against what were deemed the encroaching schemes of their neighbors, and with a keen interest sustained their share in all the border contests. Four of them were engaged in the military operations of the Revolution; and by a hazardous and successful adventure at the breaking out of the war, in the capture of Ticonderoga, the name of Ethan Allen gained a renown, which spread widely at the time, and has been perpetuated in history.

But, before we proceed in our narrative, it is necessary to state a few particulars explanatory of what will follow. Among the causes of the controversies, which existed between the colonies in early times, and continued down to the Revolution, was the uncertainty of boundary lines as described in the old charters. Considering the ignorance of all parties, at the time the charters were granted, as to the extent and interior situation of the country, it was not surprising that limits should be vaguely defined, and that the boundaries of one colony should encroach upon those of another. A difficulty of this kind arose between the colony of New York and those of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. By the grant of King Charles the Second to his brother, the Duke of York, the tract of country called New York was bounded on the east by Connecticut River, thus conflicting with the express letter of the Massachusetts and Connecticut charters, which extended those colonies

westward to the South Sea, or Pacific Ocean. After a long controversy, kept up at times with a good deal of heat on both sides, the line of division between these colonies was fixed by mutual agreement at twenty miles east of Hudson's River, running nearly in a north and south direction. This line was adopted as a compromise between Connecticut and New York, upon the consideration that the Connecticut settlers had established themselves so far to the westward under patents from that colony, as to be within about twenty miles of the Hudson. The Massachusetts boundary was decided much later to be a continuation of the Connecticut line to the north, making the western limit of Massachusetts also twenty miles from the same river. This claim was supported mainly on the ground of the precedent in the case of Connecticut, and was long resisted by New York, as interfering with previous grants from that colony extending thirty miles eastward from the Hudson.*

Meantime New Hampshire had never been brought into the controversy, because the lands to the westward of that province beyond Connecticut River had been neither settled nor surveyed. There was indeed a small settlement at Fort Dummer on the western margin of the river which was under the protection of Massachusetts, and supposed to be within that colony, till the dividing line between New Hampshire and Massachusetts was accurately run, when Fort Dummer was ascertained to be north of that line, and was afterwards considered as being within the jurisdiction of the sister colony. Such was the state of things when Benning Wentworth became governor of New Hampshire, with authority from the King to issue patents for unimproved lands within the limits of his province. Application was made for grants to the west of Connecticut River, and even beyond the Green Mountains, and in 1749 he gave a patent for a township six miles square, near the northwest angle of Massachusetts, to be so laid out, that its western limit should be

* See *A State of the Right of the Colony of New York, with Respect to its Eastern Boundary on Connecticut River, &c.* pp. 5, 7.

twenty miles from the Hudson, and coincide with the boundary line of Connecticut and Massachusetts, continued northward. This township was called Bennington.

Although the governor and council of New York remonstrated against this grant, and claimed for that colony the whole territory north of Massachusetts as far eastward as Connecticut River, yet Governor Wentworth was not deterred by this remonstrance from issuing other patents, urging in his justification, that New Hampshire had a right to the same extension westward as Massachusetts and Connecticut. Fourteen townships had been granted in 1754, when the French war broke out, and, by the peril it threatened on the frontiers, discouraged settlers from seeking a residence there, or vesting their property in lands, the title to which might be put in jeopardy, or their value destroyed, by the issue of the contest. Nor was it till the glorious victory of Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham had wrested Canada for ever from the French power, secured these border territories against all further invasion from an ancient foe, and opened the prospects of a speedy and lasting peace, that the spirit of enterprise, perhaps of adventure, combining with the hope of gain, revived a desire of possessing and settling these wild lands. Applications for new patents thronged daily upon Governor Wentworth, and within four years' time the whole number of townships granted by him, to the westward of Connecticut River, was one hundred and thirty-eight. The territory including these townships was known by the name of the *New Hampshire Grants*, which it retained till the opening of the Revolution, when its present name of *Vermont* began to be adopted.

At what time Ethan Allen and his brethren emigrated to the *Grants* is uncertain. It was not, however, till after the reduction of Canada, and probably not till the peace between England and France had been concluded. Meantime among the inhabitants of the New England colonies, a ready market had been found for the lands, and settlers were flocking over the mountains from various quarters. Many persons had passed through those lands on their way to the army in Canada, and become

acquainted with their value. The easy terms upon which the townships had been patented by Governor Wentworth enabled the original purchasers to dispose of shares, and single farms, at very low prices, thus holding out strong allurements to settlers. Apprehensions as to the validity of the title must also have induced the first proprietors to prefer a quick sale, with small profits, to the uncertain prospect of larger gains at a future day. By this union of policy and interest the lands were rapidly sold, in tracts of various dimensions, to practical farmers, who resolved to establish themselves as permanent residents on the soil. Of this number were the Allens, who selected their lands in the township of Bennington, to which they removed in company with several other persons from Connecticut.

While these things were going on, the governor of New York did not remain an idle spectator. He wrote letters to the governor of New Hampshire, protesting against his grants, and published proclamations declaring the Connecticut River to be the boundary between the two colonies. But neither proclamations nor remonstrances produced conviction in the mind of Governor Wentworth. He continued to issue his warrants; a population of hardy yeomanry was daily increasing in the New Hampshire Grants; a formidable power was taking root there, nurtured by the local feelings, united objects, and physical strength of the settlers; and the government of New York thought it time to seek redress in a higher quarter, and appeal to the Crown as the ultimate arbiter in all controversies of this nature. Accordingly the matter was brought before the King in Council, and his Majesty decided by a royal decree, in the year 1764, that the Connecticut River was the dividing line between New York and New Hampshire. In this decision all parties seemed to acquiesce. Governor Wentworth granted no more patents on the west side of the river, and the settlers showed no symptoms of uneasiness, as the only difference made in their condition by the royal decree was, that they were now declared to be under the jurisdiction of New York, whereas they had hitherto

regarded themselves as under that of New Hampshire; but this change they did not contemplate as a grievance, presuming their property and civil rights would be as well protected by the laws of the one colony as by those of the other.

But herein they soon discovered themselves to be in an error, and to differ widely in sentiment from their more astute neighbors. Men learned in the law and of high station in New York had made it appear, that jurisdiction meant the same thing as right of property; and since his Majesty had decided Connecticut River to be the eastern limit of that province, the governor and council decreed, that all the lands west of the said river appertained to New York, however long they might have been in the possession of actual occupants. This was a strange doctrine to men, who had paid their money for the lands, and by their own toil added ten-fold or a hundred-fold to their value; who had felled the forests by the strength of their sinews, and submitted for years to all the privations and discomforts of the woodman's life. In a tone of just indignation they said to these new masters, we will obey your laws, but you shall not plunder us of the substance we have gained by the sweat of our brows. The New York government, however, in conformity with their interpretation of the royal decree, proceeded to grant patents covering the lands on which farms had been brought to an advanced state of culture, houses built, and orchards planted, by the original purchasers and settlers. It is true that to all such persons was granted the privilege of taking out new patents, and securing a New York title, by paying the fees and other charges, which were greatly enhanced upon those paid at first to Governor Wentworth; that is, in other words, they were allowed the right of purchasing their own property. This was a proposition perfectly comprehensible to the most illiterate husbandman. With a very few exceptions, they refused to comply with it, alleging that they had bought their lands by a fair purchase, and had a just claim to a title, under whatever jurisdiction the King might think proper to place them; that it was not their

business to interfere with the controversies of the colonies about their respective boundaries, but it was their business, their duty, and their determination to retain and defend their lawful property. The case was aggravated by an order of the governor and council of New York, calling on all the claimants under the New Hampshire grants to appear before them, the said governor and council, with the deeds, conveyances, and other evidences of their claims, within three months, and declaring that the claims of all persons not presented within that time should be rejected. This had no effect upon the settlers, and of course their titles were looked upon as forfeited, and the lands they occupied as being the property of the colony of New York.

It would seem, that certain speculators entered deeply into the affair, influenced more by the literal construction or ambiguous meaning of charters and royal decrees, than by the power of the settlers to support their claims, or the absolute justice of their cause. Hence repeated applications for large grants were made to the governor, which he was nowise inclined to refuse, since every new patent was attended with a liberal fee to himself. Foreseeing the mischiefs, that would result to them from this growing combination of powerful and interested individuals in New York, the settlers despatched one of their number to England as an agent in their behalf, instructed to lay their case before the King, and petition for relief. This mission was successful, so far as to obtain an order from the King in Council, July, 1767, commanding the governor of New York to abstain from issuing any more patents in the disputed territory, "upon pain of his Majesty's highest displeasure," till the intentions of the King on the subject should further be made known.

This decision, having only a prospective effect, did not annul the grants already bestowed, and the New York patentees resolved to gain possession of the lands by civil process. Writs of ejectment were taken out, and served on several of the actual occupants. In a few instances the officers were resisted by the people, and prevented from serving the writs; but, for the most part, the New

Hampshire grantees inclined to meet their opponents on this ground, and refer the matter to a judicial tribunal. Ethan Allen, having already become a leader among them, by his zeal in opposing the New York party and by the boldness of his character, was appointed an agent to manage the concerns of the defendants before the court at Albany, to which the writs of ejectment had been returned. His first step was to proceed to New Hampshire, and obtain copies of Governor Wentworth's commission and instructions, by which he was authorized to grant the lands. He next went to Connecticut, and engaged the services of Mr. Ingersoll, an eminent counsellor of that day. When the time of trial arrived, these gentlemen appeared in Albany, and produced to the court the above papers, and also the original patents or grants to those persons on whom the writs of ejectment had been served. These papers were at once set aside, as having no weight in the case, since they presupposed that the boundary of New Hampshire reached to the west of Connecticut River, a point not to be admitted by any New York court or jury. The verdict was of course given for the plaintiffs. Indeed the whole process was an idle piece of formality. It being the theoretical and practical doctrine of the New York government, that all Governor Wentworth's grants were illegal, and many of the judges and lawyers being personally interested in the subsequent New York patents, a decision adverse to their declared opinion of the law, and to their private interests, was not to be expected. This was soon perceived by the people of the New Hampshire Grants, and no one of them again appeared in court, though sundry other cases of ejectment were brought up, and decided against the occupants. As all their grants stood on precisely the same footing, a precedent in one case would necessarily be followed in the others.

It is recorded, that after Allen retired from the court at Albany, two or three gentlemen interested in the New York grants called upon him, one of whom was the King's attorney-general for the colony, and advised him to go home and persuade his friends of the Green Mountains

to make the best terms they could with their new landlords, intimating that their cause was now desperate, and reminding him of the proverb, that "*might often prevails against right.*" Neither admiring the delicacy of this sentiment, nor intimidated by the threat it held out, Allen replied, "*The gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills.*" This laconic figure of speech he left to be interpreted by his visitors, adding only, when an explanation was asked by the King's attorney, that if he would accompany him to Bennington the sense should be made clear.

The purpose of his mission being thus brought to a close, Mr. Allen returned and reported the particulars to his constituents. The news spread from habitation to habitation, and created a sudden and loud murmur of discontent among the people. Seeing, as they thought, the door of justice shut against them, and having tried in vain all the peaceable means of securing their rights, they resolved to appeal to the last arbiter of disputes. The inhabitants of Bennington immediately assembled, and came to a formal determination to defend their property by force, and to unite in resisting all encroachments upon the lands occupied by persons holding titles under the warrants granted by the governor of New Hampshire. This was a bold step; but it was promptly taken, and with a seeming determination to adhere to it at any hazard, and without regard to consequences. Nor was this decision changed or weakened by a proposition on the part of the New York patentees, made about this time, which allowed to each occupant a fee simple of his farm, at the same price for which the unoccupied lands in his neighborhood were sold. The first purchasers still insisted, that this was requiring them to pay twice for their lands, and that in any view the proposal was not just, inasmuch as the value of the unoccupied lands depended mainly on the settlements, which had been made in their vicinity by the toil and at the expense of the original occupants. In short, the time for talking about charters, and boundaries, and courts of judicature was past, and the mountaineers were now fully bent on conducting the

controversy by a more summary process. The wisdom or equity of this decision, I shall forbear to discuss, and proceed to narrate some of its consequences.

Actions of ejectment continued to be brought before the Albany courts ; but the settlers, despairing of success after the precedents of the first cases, did not appear in defence, nor give themselves any more trouble in the matter. Next came sheriffs and civil magistrates to execute the writs of possession, and by due course of law to remove the occupants from the lands. At this crisis, the affair assumed a tangible shape. The mountaineers felt themselves at home on the soil which they had subdued by their own labor, and in the territory over which they had begun to exercise supreme dominion, by meeting in conventions and committees and taking counsel of each other on public concerns. To drive one of them from his house, or deprive him of his hard-earned substance, was to threaten the whole community with an issue fatal alike to their dearest interests, and to the rights, which every man deems as sacred as life itself. It was no wonder, therefore, that they should unite in a common cause, which it required their combined efforts to maintain.

As it was expected the sheriffs would soon make their appearance, precautions were taken to watch their motions, and give due notice of their approach. In the first instance, when the sheriff arrived at the house, on the owner of which he was to serve a writ of possession, he found it surrounded by a body of men, who resisted his attempts, and defeated his purpose. Complaints were sent to Lord Dunmore, then governor of New York, accompanied with the names of the leaders of this "riotous and tumultuous" assemblage ; and the governor forthwith published a proclamation, on the 1st day of November, 1770, denouncing this presumptuous act, and commanding the sheriff of Albany county to apprehend the offenders, whose names had been mentioned, and commit them to safe custody, that they might be brought to condign punishment ; authorizing him to call to his assistance the *posse comitatûs*, or the whole power of the

county. But proclamations were of as little avail as writs of possession; and the sheriff was never lucky enough to seize any of the rioters, who doubtless had the forethought to keep out of his reach.

The next exploit was at the house of James Brackenridge, whose farm was within the township of Bennington, and on whom the sheriff came to serve a writ. The house was filled with armed men, who treated this civil officer with much disrespect, and set his authority at naught. A few days afterwards he returned with a *posse*, such as he could collect for the purpose; but in this instance he was again repelled by a still more numerous party armed with muskets, which they presented at the breasts of the sheriff and his associates, and exhibited other attitudes of menace and contempt, against which these pacific messengers, armed only with the mandates and terrors of the law, did not think it prudent to contend. The rioters, as they were called, and perhaps by no very forced construction of language, came off a second time triumphant; and thus the boldness of their resolutions received a new incitement. These examples, however, did not deter the civil officers from endeavoring to discharge their duty. They appeared in other places, and in one or two instances with success; but they could not evade the vigilance of the people, who kept a watchful eye upon their movements, and who, when they caught the intruders, resorted to a mode of punishment less perilous than that with powder and ball, but attended with scarcely less indignity to the unfortunate sufferers. This summary process was denominated *chastisement with the twigs of the wilderness*, a phraseology too significant to need explanation.

As open war now existed, and hostilities had commenced, the *Green Mountain Boys*, as the belligerents were denominated, thought it advisable to organize their forces and prepare for the contest in a manner worthy of the cause at stake. In all the feats of enterprise and danger, as well as in matters of state policy, Ethan Allen had hitherto been the chief adviser and actor. It was natural, that, in arranging their military establishment, the people

should look up to him as the person best qualified to be placed at its head. He was appointed colonel-commandant, with several captains under him, of whom the most noted were Seth Warner and Remember Baker. Committees of safety were likewise chosen, and intrusted with powers for regulating local affairs. Conventions of delegates, representing the people, assembled from time to time, and passed resolves and adopted measures, which tended to harmonize their sentiments and concentrate their efforts.

Thus prepared and supported, Colonel Allen, with a promptness and activity suited to his character, drew out his volunteers in larger or smaller numbers, as the exigency of the case required, and either in person, or by the agency of his captains, presented a formidable force to the sheriffs and constables wherever they appeared within the limits of the New Hampshire Grants. The convention had decreed, that no officer from New York should attempt to take any person out of their territory on the penalty of a severe punishment; and it was also forbidden, that any surveyor should presume to run lines through the lands, or inspect them with that intention. This edict enlarged the powers of the military commanders; for it was their duty to search out such intruders, and chastise them according to the nature of their offence. A few straggling settlers, claiming titles under the New York grants, had ventured over the line of demarkation. These were forcibly dispossessed by detachments of Colonel Allen's men, frequently led on by him in person. The sheriffs and their *posse comitatûs* continued to be pursued with unremitting eagerness, whenever they dared to set their feet on the forbidden ground. With these various affairs on his hands, it will readily be imagined that the commander of the Green Mountain Boys was not idle; nor was it surprising, that he should attract the particular notice of the New York government. So many complaints were made of the riotous and disorderly proceedings of his volunteers and associates, such was the indignation of the New York party on account of the harsh measures adopted by them towards the persons, whom they seized

as trespassers upon their property, and so entirely did they set at defiance the laws of New York, to which their opponents accounted them amenable, that the governor was tempted to try the virtue of another proclamation, in which he branded the deed of dispossessing a New York settler with the opprobrious name of felony, and offered a reward of twenty pounds to any person, who would apprehend and secure Allen, or either of eight other persons connected with him, and mentioned by name.

Whether this proclamation was thought too mild in its terms, or whether new outrages had added to the enormity of the offence, it is not easy to decide; but another was promulgated, enlarging the bounty for Allen to one hundred and fifty pounds and for Seth Warner and five others to fifty pounds each. Not to be outdone by the authority of New York in exercising the prerogatives of sovereignty, Colonel Allen and his friends sent out a counter proclamation, offering a reward of five pounds to any person, who would take and deliver the attorney-general of that colony to any officer in the military association of the Green Mountain Boys; the said attorney having rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the settlers, by the zeal and pertinacity with which he had entered into the contest against them.* Notwithstanding the frequency of proclamations, it is believed that no person was apprehended in consequence of them, which is a proof that the people of the parts of New York adjoining the New Hampshire Grants were more favorable to the settlers, than were the prominent men of the colony; otherwise the allurements of the reward would have induced combinations for seizing individual offenders, particularly as the people were required by law to assist the sheriff in the execution of his office. Allen never denied, that the conduct of himself and his mountaineers, interpreted by the laws of New York or the laws of any well-ordered society, was properly called riotous; but he contended, that they were driven to this extremity by the

* Ira Allen's *History of Vermont*, p. 29.

oppression of their stronger neighbors, that no other means were left by which they could defend their property, and that under such circumstances they were perfectly justified in resorting to these means. They encroached not upon the possessions of other people, they remained on their own soil, and, if riots existed, they were caused by those, who came among them for purposes of molestation and injury. Viewing things in this light, he thought it hard, and with reason, that he should first be called a rioter, then a criminal rioter, and last of all be denounced to the world as a felon, with a price set upon his liberty, and threats of condign punishment if he should be taken.

But he was equally regardless of threats, and faithful in executing the charge reposed in him by his associates. Affairs had now been brought to such a stage, that it was the fixed determination of the settlers at all hazards to maintain their ground by expelling every person, who should presume to approach their territory under the auspices of the New York claimants. An incident occurred, which indicated the temper and spirit of the people. News came to Bennington, that Governor Tryon was ascending the North River with a body of British troops, who were on their way to subdue the refractory Green Mountain Boys, and to quell the disputes by an overwhelming force. This report at first produced alarm. The Committee of Safety and the military officers held a consultation. Their perilous situation was viewed in all its aspects, and it was finally resolved, that considering the measures they had already pursued, and that their vital interests required a perseverance in the same, "it was their duty to oppose Governor Tryon and his troops to the utmost of their power." They immediately proceeded to devise a plan of operations, by which a few sharp-shooters were to be stationed in a narrow pass on the road leading to Bennington, who were to lie concealed and shoot down the officers as they approached with the troops. These same marksmen were then to hasten forward through the woods, and join another party of their comrades at a similar position, where they were to exercise their unerring skill with

their rifles, and then retreat to the main body, who would be prepared to receive the invading troops, much disordered and dispirited as it was supposed they would be by the loss of officers. Colonel Allen despatched a trusty person to Albany, with instructions to wait the arrival of Governor Tryon's army, to take particular note of the officers, that he might know them again, and to ascertain all that he could as to the numbers of the enemy, the time of marching, and other useful intelligence. The messenger returned with the information, that the troops were wind-bound down the river, that they were destined for the posts on the lakes, and had no designs upon Bennington. Although the people were thus relieved from the necessity of putting their valor to the test, yet their prompt and bold preparation for the onset was a pledge, that in no event could it have terminated to their dishonor.

Affairs were proceeding in this train of civil commotion and active hostilities, when Governor Tryon, in a spirit of candor and forbearance hardly to have been expected at that crisis, wrote a letter to the inhabitants of Bennington and the adjacent country, dated on the 19th of May, 1772, censuring the illegality and violence of their conduct, but at the same time expressing a desire to do them justice, and inviting them to send a deputation of such persons as they might choose, who should lay before him a full state of their grievances, and the causes of their complaints. To any deputies thus sent he promised security and protection, excepting Ethan Allen, Seth Warner, and three others, who had been named in his proclamation as offenders against the laws, and for apprehending whom a reward had been offered. On receiving this letter the people of Bennington and the neighboring towns assembled by their committees, took the subject into consideration, and without delay acceded to the proposal. They appointed two delegates, Stephen Fay and Jonas Fay, to repair to New York, and wrote a letter in answer to Governor Tryon's, briefly setting forth the grounds of their discontent and the reasons of their conduct, and referring to their agents

for particular explanations. From the style and tone of the letter, it was obviously penned by Ethan Allen.

Neither was the opportunity to be passed over, by Allen and his proscribed friends, of vindicating themselves against the aspersions cast upon them by their enemies, and the stigma of being pointed out to the world as rioters, abettors of mobs, and felons. They sent a joint despatch to Governor Tryon, in the nature of a protest against the treatment they had received, and in justification of their motives and acts. Allen was again the penman for his brethren, and, considering their provocations, and the degree of excitement to which they had been wrought up, their remonstrance was clothed in language sufficiently respectful, breathing the spirit of men conscious of their dignity, and resolute in the defence of their rights, but ready to meet the awards of justice and abide by the decision of a fair and impartial tribunal. Some of their arguments are put in a forcible manner. "If we do not oppose the sheriff and his *posse*," say they, "he takes immediate possession of our houses and farms; if we do, we are immediately indicted, as rioters; and when others oppose officers in taking their friends so indicted, they are also indicted, and so on, there being no end of indictment against us so long as we act the bold and manly part and stand by our liberty. And it comes to this at last, that we must tamely be dispossessed, or oppose officers in taking possession, and, as a next necessary step, oppose the taking of rioters, so called, or run away like so many cowards and quit the country to a number of cringing, polite gentlemen, who have ideally possessed themselves of it already."

Again; "Though they style us rioters for opposing them, and seek to catch and punish us as such, yet in reality themselves are the rioters, the tumultuous, disorderly, stimulating faction, or in fine the land-jobbers; and every violent act they have done to compass their designs, though ever so much under pretence of law, is in reality a violation of law, and an insult to the constitution and authority of the Crown, as well as to many of us in person, who have been great sufferers by such

inhuman exertions of pretended law. Right and wrong are eternally the same to all periods of time, places, and nations; and coloring a crime with a specious pretence of law only adds to the criminality of it, for it subverts the very design of law, prostituting it to the vilest purposes.”*

These statements embrace the substance of their defence, considered in its theory and principles, although they were strengthened by a series of collateral facts and a combination of particulars, which were all made to assume a bearing favorable to the general cause. Governor Tryon received the deputies with affability and kindness, listened to their representations, and laid the matter of their grievances before his council. After due deliberation the council reported to the governor, that they wished him to give the people of the New Hampshire Grants all the relief in his power, and recommended that the prosecutions, on account of crimes with which they were charged, should cease till his Majesty's pleasure could be ascertained, and that the New York grantees should be requested till such time to put a stop to civil suits respecting the lands in controversy. This vote of the council was approved by the governor, and with this intelligence the deputies hastened back to their constituents, who hailed them as the messengers of peace and joy. They had never asked for more than was implied by these terms, being well persuaded, that, however the question of jurisdiction might be settled, the King would never sanction a course of proceeding, which should deprive them of their property. The impulse of gladness spread quickly to the cabins of the remotest settlers; a meeting of the people was called at Bennington, where a large concourse assembled; the minutes of the council and the governor's approval were read, and applauded with loud acclamations, and for the moment the memory of all former griefs was swept away in the overflowing tide of enthusiasm for Governor Tryon. The single cannon, con-

* Ethan Allen's *Brief Narrative of the Proceedings of the Government of New York*, &c. pp. 58, 62.

stituting the whole artillery of Colonel Allen's regiment, was drawn out and discharged several times in honor of the occasion; and Captain Warner's company of Green Mountain Boys, paraded in battle-array, fired three volleys with small arms; the surrounding multitudes at the same time answering each discharge with huzzas, and every demonstration of delight. It was accounted a day of triumph to the heroes of Bennington, and a harbinger of tranquillity to the settlers, who had hitherto been harassed by the incessant tumults of the present, or the vexatious uncertainty of the future.

But unluckily this season of rejoicing was of short duration. It was indeed premature; for although the terms brought back by the commissioners held out an appearance of reconciliation, yet the seeds of mischief were not eradicated, and they immediately began to spring up with their former vigor. The conciliatory resolve of the governor and council moreover contained an ambiguity, which seemed at first to escape the notice of the people, in the excess of their hilarity. The New York grantees were desired to cease from prosecuting any more civil suits, till the King's pleasure should be known; but nothing was said about putting in execution the suits already decided in their favor, and no prohibition intimated against their taking possession of lands claimed in consequence of such decisions, or sending surveyors to fix boundaries and localities. Hence it is obvious, that all the actual sources of dissension and tumult remained in their full force.

It was unfortunate, that an example occurred while the negotiation was pending. Soon after the commissioners set off for New York, intelligence was brought to Bennington, that a noted surveyor, employed by the New York claimants, had found his way into some of the border townships, and was busy in running out lands. A small party rallied, with Colonel Allen at their head, went in pursuit of the surveyor, fell upon his track in the woods, overtook and seized him, intending to punish him in a manner suited to their ideas of the audaciousness of his offence. They broke his instruments, examined and tried him before a

court organized according to their manner, found him guilty, and passed sentence of banishment, threatening the penalty of death, should he ever again be caught within the limits of the interdicted territory. At this juncture they heard of the success of the mission to New York, which occasioned them to dismiss the surveyor without personal injury, and to rescind their harsh sentence.

During this expedition, Colonel Allen and his party also dispossessed the tenants of an intruder, near the mouth of Otter Creek, where, under the shield of a New York title, he had taken a sawmill and other property from the original settlers, and appropriated them to himself, adding tenements and improvements for his laborers. Colonel Allen expelled the tenants, burnt their habitations, restored the sawmill to its first owner, and broke the millstones of a gristmill, which he could not burn without endangering the sawmill.

The fame of these exploits travelled with speed to New York, and kindled the anger of Governor Tryon and the members of his council. The governor wrote a letter of sharp rebuke to the inhabitants of the Grants, complaining of this conduct as an insult to government, and a violation of public faith. This letter was taken into consideration by the committees of several townships assembled at Manchester, who voted to return an answer, which was drafted by Ethan Allen, secretary to the convention. In regard to the prominent points, Mr. Allen argued in behalf of his associates, that the public faith was not plighted on their part, till after the ratification at Bennington of the terms brought back by their commissioners, and that the transactions so severely censured took place previously to that event. If there was any breach of faith in the case, it was declared to have been on the part of the land-jobbers in New York, who sent a surveyor into the disputed domain, while the commissioners were negotiating for a reconciliation of differences. As to putting the intruders at Otter Creek again into possession, which the governor had demanded in a somewhat peremptory manner, they declined doing it, assigning as a reason that those persons were justly re-

moved, and that the governor could not fail to be of the same opinion when duly informed of facts. The assembled committees moreover declared explicitly, that, by the terms of reconciliation, they did not expect any settlements or locations would be attempted on the lands in question, till his Majesty's pleasure should be known. If such were not the meaning and intent of the governor, in the proposal he had sent by the commissioners, then their act of ratification was a nullity.

To put the matter on this footing was at once to revive all the old difficulties; for the governor had no power to stop the course of law, by prohibiting those persons from taking possession of their lands, who had been confirmed in their claims by the regular decisions of the courts. All such claimants, and agents acting in their behalf, the settlers had determined to resist by force, and had given practical proofs of their resolution, which were not to be mistaken. They had also resolved to pursue, expel, or otherwise punish any person within the disputed district, who should presume to accept an office civil or military under the authority of New York. Like the Tories of the revolution, these people were considered as the worst kind of enemies, and treated with uncommon severity. In an unlucky hour, two or three of them accepted from Governor Tryon commissions of justices of the peace, and had the hardihood to act in their official dignity. The indignation and wrath of the Green Mountain Boys were roused. In one instance the unhappy delinquent was brought before the Committee of Safety, where the resolve of the convention was read to him, forbidding any one in the territory to hold an office under the colony of New York; and then judgement was pronounced against him, in the presence of many persons, by which he was sentenced to be tied to a tree, and chastised "with the twigs of the wilderness" on his naked back, to the number of two hundred stripes, and immediately expelled from the district, and threatened with death if he should return, unless specially permitted by the convention.

In the midst of these rigors, the mode of punishment was sometimes rather ludicrous than severe. In the

town of Arlington lived a doctor, who openly professed himself a partisan of New York, and was accustomed to speak disrespectfully of the convention and committees, espousing the cause of the New York claimants, and advising people to purchase lands under their title. He was admonished by his neighbors, and made to understand, that this tone of conversation was not acceptable, and was requested to change it, or at least to show his prudence by remaining silent. Far from operating any reform, these hints only stirred up the ire of the courageous doctor, who forthwith armed himself with pistols and other weapons of defence, proclaiming his sentiments more boldly than ever, setting opposition at defiance, and threatening to try the full effects of his personal prowess and implements of warfare on any man, who should have the temerity to approach him with an unfriendly design. Such a boast was likely to call up the martial spirit of his opponents, who accordingly came upon the doctor at an unguarded moment, and obliged him to surrender at discretion. He was thence transferred to the Green Mountain Tavern, in Bennington, where he was arraigned before the committee, who, not satisfied with his defence, sentenced him to a novel punishment, which they ordered to be put in immediate execution.

Before the door of this tavern, which served the double purpose of a court-house and an inn, stood a sign-post twenty-five feet high, the top of which was adorned with the skin of a catamount, stuffed to the size of life, with its head turned towards New York, and its jaws distended, showing large naked teeth, and grinning terror to all who should approach from that quarter. It was the judgement of the court, that the contumacious doctor should be tied in a chair, and drawn up by a rope to the catamount, where he was to remain suspended two hours; which punishment was inflicted, in the presence of a numerous assemblage of people, much to their satisfaction and merriment. The doctor was then let down, and permitted to depart to his own house.

On two or three occasions, Colonel Allen was near being taken, in consequence of the rewards offered for

him in the governor's proclamations. When he made excursions abroad, whether for military or other purposes, he commonly went armed with a musket and a brace of pistols. Being on a tour to the north, in company with a single friend, he one evening entered a house not many miles from Crown Point, in which, to his surprise and after it was too late to retreat, he found there were two sergeants and ten men. He was known to the sergeants, and had soon reason to suspect, that they intended to seize him. Putting the best face upon the matter, however, and concealing his suspicions, he called for supper, conversed in great good humor with the sergeants, asked them to drink with him, and the evening passed away merrily till bedtime. It then appeared, that there were no spare beds in the house, as they had all been taken by the first comers; but these persons very civilly proposed to yield their claims to Colonel Allen, and pressed him with a show of earnestness to accept their offer. He declined it, with thanks for their courtesy, declaring that he could not think of depriving them of their rest merely for his personal accommodation, and that, as the weather was warm, he and his companions would seek lodgings in the barn. To hide their real design they left their guns behind. The sergeants accompanied them to the barn, saw them safely in their quarters, wished them a good night's repose, and returned to the house. By a previous concert a young girl in the family took the first opportunity unseen to carry the guns to the barn. The sergeants waited till they supposed the two travelers were asleep, and that there would be no danger from their pistols, and then stole softly out, flushed with the prospect of speedily entrapping the renowned leader of the Green Mountain Boys. But their imaginary victory ended in disappointment. Colonel Allen, having succeeded in his scheme of deceiving his pursuers, had arisen and departed, and the night screened him from their search.

At another time, while he was on a visit to his brother in Salisbury, Connecticut, a plot was laid by several persons, residing between that place and Hudson's River, to

come upon him by surprise, seize and carry him to Poughkeepsie jail. This plot was accidentally discovered in time to defeat the designs of the conspirators.

Meantime the spirit of hostility between the two parties continued to increase, the New York claimants being resolved to enforce their claims by all the power they could put in action, and the original settlers equally determined to resist aggression by every species of force, which they could wield. Hence commotions, riots, mobs, and bloodshed were common occurrences, though the settlers adhered strictly to their declared principle of acting on the defensive, never pursuing offenders beyond their own domain, but showing little mercy to those, who dared to violate their decrees, question their authority, and above all to step over the line of demarcation as the agents of their enemies. At last the New York grantees, discouraged with this mode of conducting so fruitless a contest, combined their influence, and applied to the Assembly of that province for legislative aid. The result was a law, purporting to be an act for preventing tumultuous and riotous assemblies, and punishing rioters, which may safely be pronounced the most extraordinary specimen of legislative despotism, that has ever found a place in a statute-book. After naming Ethan Allen, Seth Warner, Remember Baker, and several others, as the principal ringleaders in the riots, the law empowers the governor and council to send out an order, requiring those persons, or any others indicted for offences, to surrender themselves for commitment to one of his Majesty's justices of the peace within seventy days from the date of the order; and in case the summons should not be obeyed, the person neglecting to surrender himself was to be adjudged and deemed as convicted, and to suffer death if indicted for a capital offence; and moreover the Supreme Court was authorized to award execution, in the same manner as if there had been an actual trial, proof of guilt, and a judicial sentence.*

* This act, certainly one of the most curious in the annals of legislation, was passed on the 9th of March, 1774, and may be seen in Ethan Allen's *Narrative of the Proceedings of the Government of New York*, &c. p. 23. And also in Slade's *Vermont State Papers*, p. 42.

On the same day that this law was enacted, the governor sent out another proclamation, offering a reward for apprehending and imprisoning Ethan Allen and seven of his associates, as if never tired of exercising this prerogative of his office, although hitherto without the least shadow of success. The object of the law and of the proclamation was to draw from their strong-holds the principal rioters, as they were called, and inflict upon them such punishments as would quell their opposition, and dishearten their followers. The effect was far otherwise. The committees of the several townships assembled in convention, and took up the subject with more calmness, than could have been anticipated under circumstances so irritating. They reviewed the causes of the controversy, asserted anew their rights, affirmed that they were not the aggressors, that all the violence to which they had been accessory was fully justified by the laws of self-preservation, and that they were determined to maintain the ground they had taken, without fear or favor, at every hazard and every sacrifice. They closed their public proceedings by a resolve, that all necessary preparations should be made, and that the inhabitants should hold themselves in readiness at a minute's warning to defend those among them, "who, for their merit in the great and general cause, had been falsely denominated rioters;" declaring at the same time, that they would act only on the defensive, and that in all civil cases, and criminal prosecutions really such, they would assist the proper officers to enforce the execution of the laws.

In addition to these public doings of the people at large by their representatives, the proscribed persons, at the head of whom was Ethan Allen, published a manifesto, to which they jointly affixed their names, containing a defence of themselves and free remarks on the New York act and proclamation. To look for moderation as a shining quality in a paper of this kind, is perhaps more than would be authorized by the nature of the case, or the character of the individuals concerned; yet it expresses sentiments, which we should be sorry not to find

in men, whom we would respect, and in whom we would confide in the hour of peril. It speaks in a tone of deep complaint of the injuries they have suffered from the vindictive persecutions of their enemies, protests against the tyrannical abuse of power, which would arraign them as criminals for protecting their own property, and threatens retaliation upon all, who should attempt to put in execution against them the sanguinary edict of the New York Assembly. But in the midst of the sea of dangers, with which they seemed to be surrounded, they braced themselves up with the consolatory reflection, "that printed sentences of death will not kill us; and if the executioners approach us, they will be as likely to fall victims to death as we." They furthermore proclaimed, that, should any person be tempted, by the "wages of unrighteousness offered in the proclamation," to apprehend any of them or their friends, it was their deliberate purpose to inflict immediate death upon so rash and guilty an offender.

To this pitch of legalized infatuation on the one part, and of animosity and violence on the other, had the controversy attained by imbibing new aliment at every stage, when it was suddenly arrested by events of vastly greater moment, which drew away the attention of the political leaders in New York from these border feuds to affairs of more vital interest. The Revolutionary struggle was on the eve of breaking out, and the ferment, which had already begun to agitate the public mind from one end of the continent to the other, was not less active in New York than in other places. From this time, therefore, the Green Mountain settlers were permitted to remain in comparative tranquillity. Several years elapsed, it is true, before they released themselves entirely from the claims of their neighbors, and established their independence on an undisputed basis; yet they always acted as an independent community, assumed and exercised the powers of a separate body politic, and secured at last, to the fullest extent, their original demands and pretensions. Ethan Allen had a large share in bringing the contest to its happy termination; but before we proceed any further

with this subject, it is necessary to follow him through a different career, and trace the series of incidents, which befel him in the War of the Revolution.

At this point in our narrative, however, it is proper to turn our attention, for a moment, to a literary performance by Ethan Allen, which had some influence in its day, and which is still valuable for the historical matter it embodies. Having zealously embarked in the cause of the Green Mountain Boys, to which he was prompted both by interest and ambition, he applied his vigorous mind to a thorough investigation of the subject. He pursued his researches into the ancient charters, followed out their bearings upon each other in regard to boundary lines, studied the history of the colonies, and thus collected a mass of authentic materials, which, with an account of recent events, known to him personally, he compiled into a volume extending to more than two hundred pages. He, who in this work shall expect to find flowers of rhetoric, or a polished diction, or models of grammatical accuracy, or the art of a practised writer, will be disappointed; but, clothed in the garb of an unformed style and confused method, there are many sagacious remarks and pertinent expressions; many strong points of argument stated with force, if not with elegance; many evidences of a mind accustomed to observe and think, draw its own inferences, and utter its sentiments with a fearless reliance on its own resources and guidance.*

Early in the year 1775, as soon as it was made manifest, by the attitude assumed on the part of the British government against the colonies, and by the conduct of General Gage, in Boston, that open hostilities must inevitably commence in a short time, it began to be secretly whisper-

* The work is entitled, *A brief Narrative of the Proceedings of the Government of New York, &c.*, printed at Hartford, 1774. The supplementary part contains a reply to a pamphlet, published a short time before, in New York, by authority, entitled, *A State of the Right of the Colony of New York, with Respect to its Eastern Boundary, &c.* It is hardly necessary to observe, that the particulars of the present memoir have thus far been chiefly derived from these two publications; to which may be added, Ira Allen's *History of Vermont*.

ed among the principal politicians in New England, that the capture of Ticonderoga was an object demanding the first attention. In the month of March, Samuel Adams and Dr. Joseph Warren, as members of the Committee of Correspondence in Boston, sent an agent privately into Canada, on a political mission, with instructions to ascertain the feelings of the people there in regard to the approaching contest, and to make such reports as his observations should warrant. Faithful to his charge, and vigilant in his inquiries, this agent sent back intelligence from Montreal, and among other things advised, that by all means the garrison of Ticonderoga should be seized as quickly as possible after the breaking out of hostilities, adding that the people of the New Hampshire Grants had already agreed to undertake the task, and that they were the most proper persons to be employed in it.

This hint was given three weeks anterior to the battle of Lexington, and how far it influenced future designs may not be known; but it is certain, that, eight days after that event, several gentlemen at that time attending the Assembly in Hartford, Connecticut, concerted a plan for surprising Ticonderoga, and seizing the cannon in that fortress, for the use of the army, then marching from all quarters to the environs of Boston. Although these gentlemen were members of the Assembly, yet the scheme was wholly of a private nature, without any overt sanction from the authority of the colony. A committee was appointed, at the head of which were Edward Mott and Noah Phelps, with instructions to proceed to the frontier towns, inquire into the state of the garrison, and, should they think proper, to raise men and take possession of the same. To aid the project, one thousand dollars were obtained from the treasury as a loan, for which security was given.

On their way the committee collected sixteen men in Connecticut, and went forward to Pittsfield, in Massachusetts, where they laid open their plan to Colonel Easton and Mr. John Brown, who agreed to join them, and they proceeded in company to Bennington. Colonel

Easton, being in command of a regiment of militia, proposed to engage some of them in the expedition, and enlisted volunteers as he passed along, between forty and fifty of whom reached Bennington the next day. As no time was to be lost, a council of war was immediately called, in which it was voted that Colonel Ethan Allen should send out parties to the northward, secure the roads, and prevent intelligence from passing in that direction. This was accordingly done. Colonel Allen's Green Mountain Boys having been collected as speedily as possible, the little army marched, and arrived at Castleton on the evening of the 7th of May.

Here another council of war was held, and Ethan Allen was appointed the commander of the expedition, James Easton the second in command, and Seth Warner the third. Being thus organized, they proceeded to fix a plan of operations. It was decided that Colonel Allen and the principal officers, with the main body of their forces, consisting of about one hundred and forty men, should march directly to Shoreham, opposite to Ticonderoga. A party of thirty men, commanded by Captain Herrick, was at the same time to move upon Skenesborough, take Major Skene* and his people into custody, seize all the boats that could be found there, and hasten with them down the Lake to meet Colonel Allen at Shoreham. Captain Douglass was also despatched to Pantou, beyond Crown Point, in search of boats, which were to be brought to Shoreham, as it was supposed the boats at that place would be inadequate to the transportation of the troops across the Lake.

The position now occupied was nine miles from Skenesborough, and twenty-five from Ticonderoga by the route to be traversed. Just as these arrangements were settled, the men selected for each party, and the whole prepared to march, Colonel Arnold arrived from Massachusetts, having been commissioned by the Committee of Safety of that colony, without any knowledge

* The son of Governor Skene, who was likewise called Major Skene, and who was at this time absent in England.

of what had been done in Connecticut, to raise men and proceed on the same enterprise. He brought no men with him, but had agreed with officers in Stockbridge to enlist and send forward such as could be obtained, making all haste himself to join the expedition, which he did not hear was on foot till he came to that town. A difficulty now arose, which threatened for the moment to defeat the whole scheme. Arnold claimed the command of all the troops, by virtue of his commission from the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, averring that this was a superior appointment to that of any other officer concerned, and demanding the preference as his right. The rumor soon got to the ears of the soldiers, who broke out into vehement clamors, and were on the point of a mutiny, declaring that they would serve under no officers except those with whom they had engaged, and that they would club their muskets and march home. The flame was quenched by the prudent conduct of Colonels Allen and Easton; and when Arnold discovered, that his pretensions met with no favor either from the men or their leaders, he yielded to necessity and agreed to unite with them as a volunteer.

The march was pursued according to the original plan, and Colonel Allen arrived without molestation on the shore of the Lake opposite to Ticonderoga. It was important to have a guide, who was acquainted with the grounds around the fortress, and the places of access. Allen made inquiries as to these points of Mr. Beman, a farmer residing near the Lake in Shoreham, who answered, that he seldom crossed to Ticonderoga, and was little acquainted with the particulars of its situation; but that his son Nathan, a young lad, passed much of his time there in company with the boys of the garrison. Nathan was called, and appeared by his answers to be familiar with every nook in the fort, and every passage and by-path by which it could be approached. In the eye of Colonel Allen he was the very person to thread out the best avenue; and by the consent of the father and a little persuasion, Nathan Beman was engaged to be the guide of the party. The next step was to procure boats, which

were very deficient in number, as neither Captain Herrick nor Captain Douglass had sent any from Skenesborough or Panton. Eighty-three men only had crossed, when the day began to dawn; and while the boats were sent back for the rear division, Colonel Allen resolved to move immediately against the fort.

He drew up his men in three ranks, addressed them in a short harangue, ordered them to face to the right, and, placing himself at the head of the middle file, led them silently but with a quick step up the heights on which the fortress stood, and before the sun rose he had entered the gate and formed his men on the parade between the barracks. Here they gave three huzzas, which aroused the sleeping inmates. When Colonel Allen passed the gate, a sentinel snapped his fusee at him, and then retreated under a covered way. Another sentinel made a thrust at an officer with a bayonet, which slightly wounded him. Colonel Allen returned the compliment with a cut on the side of the soldier's head, at which he threw down his musket and asked quarter. No more resistance was made. Allen demanded to be shown to the apartment of Captain Delaplace, the commandant of the garrison. It was pointed out, and Colonel Allen, with Nathan Beman at his elbow, who knew the way, hastily ascended the stairs, which were attached to the outside of the barracks, and called out with a voice of thunder at the door, ordering the astonished captain instantly to appear, or the whole garrison should be sacrificed. Started at so strange and unexpected a summons, he sprang from his bed and opened the door, when the first salutation of his boisterous and unseasonable visitor was an order immediately to surrender the fort. Rubbing his eyes and trying to collect his scattered senses, the Captain asked by what authority he presumed to make such a demand. "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," replied Allen. Not accustomed to hear much of the Continental Congress in this remote corner, nor to respect its authority when he did, the commandant began to speak; but Colonel Allen cut short the thread of his discourse by lifting his sword

over his head, and reiterating the demand for an immediate surrender. Having neither permission to argue nor power to resist, Captain Delaplace submitted, ordering his men to parade without arms, and the garrison was given up to the victors.*

This surprise was effected about four o'clock in the morning of the 10th of May. Warner crossed the Lake with the remainder of the troops, and marched up to the fort. The whole number of men under Colonel Allen, as reported by the committee on the spot, in a letter to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, dated the day after the assault, was one hundred and forty from the New Hampshire Grants, and seventy from Massachusetts, besides sixteen from Connecticut. The prisoners were one captain, one lieutenant, and forty-eight subalterns and privates, exclusive of women and children. They were all sent to Hartford, in Connecticut. The principal advantage of the capture, except that of possessing the post, was one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, also swivels, mortars, small arms, and stores. The cannon only were of much importance.

As soon as the prisoners were secured, and the bustle of the occasion had a little subsided, Colonel Allen sent off Warner with a detachment of men to take Crown Point. Strong head-winds drove back the boats, and the whole party returned the same evening. The attempt was renewed a day or two afterwards, and proved successful. A sergeant and eleven men, being the whole garrison, were made prisoners. Sixty-one good cannon were found there, and fifty-three unfit for service. Previously to this affair, Colonel Allen had sent a messenger to Captain Remember Baker, who was at Onion River, requesting him to join the army at Ticonderoga

* The facts respecting Nathan Beman were related to me by a gentleman, who received them from Nathan Beman himself. Whether this exploit of his boyhood was the only one performed by him during the war, I know not; but his martial aptitude was displayed in another career, he having been for many years a noted hunter of wolves on the northern borders of New York between Lakes Champlain and Ontario.

with as large a number of men as he could assemble. Baker obeyed the summons; and when he was coming up the Lake with his party, he met two small boats, which had been despatched from Crown Point to carry intelligence of the reduction of Ticonderoga to St. John's and Montreal, and solicit reinforcements. The boats were seized by Baker, and he arrived at Crown Point just in time to unite with Warner in taking possession of that post.

Thus the main object of the expedition was attained; but the troubles of the leaders were not at an end. No sooner had the fort surrendered, than Arnold assumed the command, affirming that he was the only officer invested with legal authority. His pretensions were not heeded, and although he was vehement and positive, yet it was in vain to issue orders, which nobody would obey; and finally he consented to a sort of divided control between Colonel Allen and himself, he acting as a subordinate, but not wholly without official consideration. He had behaved with bravery in the assault, marching on the left of Colonel Allen, and entering the fortress side by side with him. When the Connecticut committee perceived his design, they repelled it upon the principle, that the government of Massachusetts had no concern in the matter, that the men from that colony under Colonel Easton were paid by Connecticut, and that he could be considered in no other light than a volunteer. The same committee installed Colonel Allen anew in the command of Ticonderoga and its dependencies, which by a formal commission they authorized him to retain, till Connecticut or the Continental Congress should send him instructions. A narrative of the particulars was despatched by an express to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, who confirmed the appointment, and directed Arnold not to interfere.

The party that went to Skenesborough came unawares upon Major Skene the younger, whom they took prisoner, seizing likewise a schooner and several bateaux, with all which they hastened to Ticonderoga. Allen and Arnold now formed a plan to make a rapid

push upon St. John's, take a king's sloop that lay there, and attempt a descent upon the garrison. The schooner and bateaux were armed and manned; and, as Arnold had been a seaman in his youth, the command of the schooner was assigned to him, while the bateaux were committed to the charge of Allen. They left Ticonderoga nearly at the same time, but the wind being fresh the schooner outsailed the bateaux. At eight o'clock on the evening of the 17th of May, Arnold was within thirty miles of St. John's; and, as the weather was calm, he fitted out two bateaux with thirty-five men, leaving the schooner behind and proceeding to St. John's, where he arrived at six o'clock the next morning, surprised and took a sergeant and twelve men, and the king's sloop of about seventy tons with two brass six-pounders and seven men, without any loss on either side. The wind proving favorable, he stayed but two hours and then returned, taking with him the sloop, four bateaux, and some valuable stores, having destroyed five bateaux, being all that remained. He was induced to hasten away, because largereenforcements were momentarily expected from Montreal and Chamblee.

About fifteen miles from St. John's, he met Colonel Allen, pressing onward with his party. A salute of three discharges of cannon on the one side, and three volleys of musketry on the other, was fired, and Allen paid Arnold a visit on board the king's sloop. After inquiring into the situation of things, Allen determined to proceed to St. John's and keep possession there with about one hundred men. He arrived just before night, landed his party, and marched about a mile towards Laprairie, where he formed an ambuscade to intercept the reenforcements hourly expected. But finding his men greatly fatigued, and ascertaining that a force much superior to his own was on its approach, he retired to the other side of the river. In this position, he was attacked early in the morning by two hundred men, and driven to his boats, with which he returned to Ticonderoga. His loss was three men taken prisoners, one of whom escaped in a few days.

While this train of events was in progress, Colonel Easton had repaired to Massachusetts and Connecticut, instructed by Colonel Allen and the committee to explain to the governments of those colonies the transactions attending the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and to solicit aids to secure these conquests. Since the affair had begun in Connecticut, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts seemed well inclined to let that colony have both the honor and burden of maintaining the acquisitions, which had been gained under her auspices, and wrote to the governor of Connecticut, disclaiming all motives of interference, and recommending the business to his special charge. Governor Trumbull immediately prepared for sending up a reenforcement of four hundred men. But in truth, neither party was ambitious of assuming the responsibility of further operations, till the views and intentions of the Continental Congress should be known. Messengers were accordingly despatched to Philadelphia; and also to the Convention of New York, in which province the conquered posts were situate. Policy as well as courtesy required that New York should be consulted, since the cooperation of that colony was essential to the harmony and success of any future measures. The Continental Congress approved what had been done, and requested Governor Trumbull to send a body of troops to Lake Champlain, sufficient to defend the garrisons of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, till further orders from the Congress, and at the same time desired the Convention of New York to supply the said troops with provisions. This arrangement was carried into effect, and one thousand troops were ordered to march from Connecticut under the command of Colonel Hinman.

Meantime Allen and Arnold kept their stations, the former as commander-in-chief at Ticonderoga, and the latter at Crown Point, where he acted the part rather of a naval than a military officer, having under his care the armed sloop and schooner, which had been taken, and a small flotilla of bateaux. Some of Colonel Allen's men went home, but others came in, both from the New

Hampshire Grants, and from Albany county, so that his numbers increased. A few men also joined Arnold, whom he had engaged in Massachusetts, when he crossed the country to execute the commission of the Committee of Safety.

Flushed with his successes, and eager to pursue them, Colonel Allen began to extend his views more widely, and to think of the conquest of Canada. Persuaded that such an undertaking was feasible, and foreseeing its immense importance to the cause in which the country was now openly embarked, he wrote the following letter to the Provincial Congress of New York.

"Crown Point, 2 June, 1775.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Before this time you have undoubtedly received intelligence, not only of the taking of the fortified places on Lake Champlain, but also of the armed sloop and boats therein, and the taking possession of a schooner, which is the property of Major Skene, which has been armed and manned, and of the conversion of them, with a large train of artillery, to the defence of the liberty and the constitutional rights of America. You have likewise undoubtedly been informed, that the expedition was undertaken at the special encouragement and request of a number of respectable gentlemen in the colony of Connecticut. The pork forwarded to subsist the army by your directions evinces your approbation of the procedure; and, as it was a private expedition, and common fame reports that there is a number of overgrown Tories in the province, you will the readier excuse me in not taking your advice in the matter, lest the enterprise might have been prevented by their treachery. It is here reported, that some of them have been converted, and that others have lost their influence.

"If in those achievements there be any thing honorary, the subjects of your government, namely, the New Hampshire settlers, are justly entitled to a large share, as they had a great majority of the soldiery, as well as the command, in making those acquisitions; and, as you

justify and approve the same, I expect you already have or soon will lay before the grand Continental Congress the great disadvantage it must inevitably be to the colonies to evacuate Lake Champlain, and give up to the enemies of our country those invaluable acquisitions, the key either of Canada or of our own country, according to which party holds the same in possession, and makes a proper improvement of it. The key is ours as yet, and provided the colonies would suddenly push an army of two or three thousand men into Canada, they might make a conquest of all that would oppose them, in the extensive province of Quebec, unless reenforcements from England should prevent it. Such a division would weaken General Gage, or insure us Canada. I would lay my life on it, that with fifteen hundred men I could take Montreal. Provided I could be thus furnished, and an army could take the field, it would be no insuperable difficulty to take Quebec.

“This object should be pursued, though it should take ten thousand men, for England cannot spare but a certain number of her troops; nay, she has but a small number that are disciplined, and it is as long as it is broad the more that are sent to Quebec, the less they can send to Boston, or any other part of the continent. And there will be this unspeakable advantage in directing the war into Canada, that instead of turning the Canadians and Indians against us, as is wrongly suggested by many, it would unavoidably attach and connect them to our interest. Our friends in Canada can never help us, until we first help them, except in a passive or inactive manner. There are now about seven hundred regular troops in Canada.

“It may be thought, that to push an army into Canada would be too premature and imprudent. If so, I propose to make a stand at the Isle-aux-Noix, which the French fortified by intrenchments the last war, and greatly fatigued our large army to take it. It is about fifteen miles on this side of St. John's, and is an island in the river, on which a small artillery placed would command it. An establishment on a frontier, so far north, would not only

better secure our own frontier, but put it in our power better to work our policy with the Canadians and Indians, or, if need be, to make incursions into the territory of Canada, the same as they could into our country, provided they had the sovereignty of Lake Champlain, and had erected headquarters at or near Skenesborough. Our only having it in our power, thus to make incursions into Canada, might probably be the very reason why it would be unnecessary so to do, even if the Canadians should prove more refractory than I think for.

“Lastly, I would propose to you to raise a small regiment of rangers, which I could easily do, and that mostly in the counties of Albany and Charlotte, provided you should think it expedient to grant commissions, and thus regulate and put them under pay. Probably you may think this an impertinent proposal. It is truly the first favor I ever asked of the government, and if granted, I shall be zealously ambitious to conduct for the best good of my country, and the honor of the government. I am, Gentlemen, &c.

“ETHAN ALLEN.”

In forming an estimate of this letter, it is to be remembered that no person had as yet ventured publicly to recommend an invasion of Canada. It had in fact hitherto been the policy of Congress to give as little offence to the Canadians as possible, this course being thought the most likely to conciliate their friendship. A resolve passed that assembly, the day before the above letter was written, expressing a decided opinion, that no colony or body of colonists ought to countenance any incursion into Canada. The same sentiments had been declared in a public manner by the New York Provincial Congress. Ethan Allen's letter, therefore, had little chance of meeting with favor from the persons to whom it was addressed. The merit of being the first to suggest plans, which were afterwards adopted by the national councils, as of great political moment, was nevertheless due to him. Before the end of three months from the date of his letter, an expedition against Canada was set on foot by Congress

and seconded by the voice of the whole nation. Colonel Allen's advice was deemed bold and incautious when it was given, but subsequent events proved, that its basis was wisdom and forethought; and had it been heeded, and a competent force pushed immediately into Canada, before the British had time to rally and concentrate their scattered forces, few in numbers and imperfectly organized, there can be no reasonable doubt, that the campaign would have been successful, instead of the disastrous failure, which actually ensued, and which may be ascribed more to the wavering sentiments and tardy motions of Congress in projecting and maturing the expedition, than to any defect in the plan or in the manner of its execution.

As Colonel Allen knew it was at this time the prevailing policy to secure the neutrality of the Canadians, he made no hostile demonstrations towards Canada, after the prudent measure in conjunction with Arnold of seizing all the watercraft at St. John's; unless the sending of a reconnoitering party over the line may be considered a belligerent act. It is evident, however, that he did not look upon it in that light; for when his party of four men returned, and reported that they had been fired upon by about thirty Canadians, he interpreted it as a breach of peace on the side of the assailants. Embracing this as a fit opportunity, he wrote a paper, combining the two properties of a complaint and an address, which was signed by him and Colonel Easton, and despatched to a confidential person at Montreal, with directions to have it translated into French and circulated among the people. The idea of neutrality was put forward in this paper, as the one which the Canadians ought to cherish, since they had no direct interest in taking part with the English, and certainly no cause for joining in a quarrel against their neighbors of the other colonies.

The troops from Connecticut under Colonel Hinman at length arrived at Ticonderoga, and Colonel Allen's command ceased. His men chiefly returned home, their term of service having expired. He and Seth Warner set off on a journey to the Continental Congress,

with the design of procuring pay for the soldiers, who had served under them, and of soliciting authority to raise a new regiment in the New Hampshire Grants. In both these objects they were successful. By an order of Congress they were introduced on the floor of the House, and they communicated verbally to the members such information as was desired. Congress voted to allow the men, who had been employed in taking and garrisoning Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the same pay as was received by officers and privates in the American army; and also recommended to the Provincial Congress of New York, that, after consulting with General Schuyler, "they should employ in the army to be raised for the defence of America those called Green Mountain Boys, under such officers as the said Green Mountain Boys should choose." This matter was referred to the government of New York, that no controversy might arise about jurisdiction, at a time when affairs of vastly greater moment demanded the attention of all parties.

Allen and Warner repaired without delay to the New York Congress, presented themselves at the door of the hall, and requested an audience, the resolve of the Continental Congress having already been received and discussed. An embarrassing difficulty now arose among the members, which caused much warmth of debate. The persons, who asked admittance, were outlaws by an existing act of the legislature of New York, and, although the Provincial Congress was a distinct body from the old assembly, organized in opposition to it, and holding its recent principles and doings in detestation, yet some members had scruples on the subject of disregarding in so palpable a manner the laws of the land, as to join in a public conference with men, who had been proclaimed by the highest authority in the colony to be rioters and felons. There was also another party, whose feelings and interest were enlisted on the side of their scruples, who had taken an active part in the contest, and whose antipathies were too deeply rooted to be at once eradicated. On the other hand, the ardent friends of liberty, who regarded the great cause at stake as paramount to every

thing else, and who were willing to show their disrespect for the old assembly, argued not only the injustice but tyranny of the act in question, and represented in strong colors the extreme impolicy of permitting ancient feuds to mar the harmony and obstruct the concert of action, so necessary for attaining the grand object of the wishes and efforts of every member present. In the midst of the debate, Captain Sears moved that Ethan Allen should be admitted to the floor of the House. The motion was seconded by Melancton Smith, and was carried by a majority of two to one. A similar motion prevailed in regard to Seth Warner.

When these gentlemen had addressed the House, they withdrew ; and it was resolved, that a regiment of Green Mountain Boys should be raised, not exceeding five hundred men, and to consist of seven companies. They were to choose their own officers, except the fieldofficers, who were to be appointed by the Congress of New York ; but it was requested that the people would nominate such persons as they approved. A lieutenant-colonel was to be the highest officer. The execution of the resolve was referred to General Schuyler, who immediately gave notice to the inhabitants of the Grants, and ordered them to proceed in organizing the regiment.

Meantime Allen and Warner had finished their mission, and returned to their friends. The committees of several townships assembled at Dorset to choose officers for the new regiment. The choice fell on Seth Warner for lieutenant-colonel, and on Samuel Safford for major. This nomination was confirmed by the New York Congress. Whether Colonel Allen declined being a candidate, or whether it was expected that the regiment would ultimately have a colonel, and that he would be advanced to that post, or whether his name was omitted for any other reason, I have no means of determining. At any rate, he was not attached to the regiment ; and in a few days, he joined General Schuyler, at Ticonderoga, as a volunteer. He wrote a letter of thanks to the New York Congress, in the following words. "When I reflect on the unhappy controversy, which

has many years subsisted between the government of New York, and the settlers on the New Hampshire Grants, and also contemplate the friendship and union that have lately taken place, in making a united resistance against ministerial vengeance and slavery, I cannot but indulge fond hopes of a reconciliation. To promote this salutary end I shall contribute my influence, assuring you, that your respectful treatment not only to Mr. Warner and myself, but to the Green Mountain Boys in general, in forming them into a battalion, is by them duly regarded; and I will be responsible, that they will reciprocate this favor by boldly hazarding their lives, if need be, in the common cause of America."

Knowing the value of Colonel Allen's experience and activity, General Schuyler persuaded him to remain in the army, chiefly with the view of acting as a pioneer among the Canadians. In pursuance of this design, as soon as the army reached Isle-aux-Noix, an address to the people of Canada was written by General Schuyler, the drift of which was to convince them that the invasion was exclusively against the British, and in no degree intended as an encroachment on the rights and liberties of the ancient inhabitants. On the contrary, they were invited to unite with the Americans, and participate in the honorable enterprise of throwing off the shackles of an oppressive government, asserting the claims of justice, and securing the enjoyment of freedom. This address was committed to the hands of Ethan Allen, who was instructed to proceed with it into Canada, make it known to the inhabitants in such a manner as his discretion should dictate, and ascertain as far as he could their temper and sentiments.

He went first to Chamblee, where he found many persons friendly to the American cause, and among them several men of the first respectability and influence. He was visited by these gentlemen, and by the militia captains in that neighborhood, who seemed well disposed to join with the Americans, if there was any chance of their coming forward in such numbers as to hold out a probability of success. They furnished Colonel Allen

with a guard, who constantly attended him under arms, and escorted him through the woods. He sent a messenger to the chiefs of the Caghnawaga Indians, proffering to them peace and friendship. They returned the compliment by delegating two of their tribe, with beads and a belt of wampum, to hold a conference with Colonel Allen and confirm the friendly disposition of the Caghnawagas. The ceremony was performed with much parade and solemnity, according to the Indian manner. After spending eight days on this mission, traversing different parts of the country between the Sorel and St. Lawrence, and conversing with many persons, Colonel Allen returned to the army at Isle-aux-Noix. The result of his observation was, that, should the American army invest St. John's, and advance into Canada with a respectable force, a large number of the inhabitants would immediately join in arms with the Americans; but till such a movement should be made, it was not likely that there would be any open indications of hostility to the British power. His conduct in executing this service was approved by General Schuyler.

Just at this time the command of the Canada expedition devolved on General Montgomery, who advanced to St. John's, and laid siege to that garrison. Colonel Allen was immediately despatched to retrace his steps, penetrate the country, and raise as many of the inhabitants as he could to unite in arms with the American forces. He had been absent a week when he wrote as follows to General Montgomery.

"I am now at the parish of St. Ours, four leagues from Sorel to the south. I have two hundred and fifty Canadians under arms. As I march they gather fast. There are the objects of taking the vessels in the Sorel and General Carleton. These objects I pass by to assist the army besieging St. John's. If that place be taken, the country is ours; if we miscarry in this, all other achievements will profit but little. I am fearful our army will be sickly, and that the siege may be hard; therefore I choose to assist in conquering St John's. You may rely on it, that I shall join you in about three days with

five hundred or more Canadian volunteers. I could raise one or two thousand in a week's time, but I will first visit the army with a less number, and, if necessary, go again recruiting. It is with the advice of the officers with me, that I speedily repair to the army. God grant you wisdom and fortitude and every accomplishment of a victorious general."

Unluckily these anticipations were blighted in their bloom. In an evil hour Colonel Allen was induced to change his judicious determination of joining General Montgomery without delay, and to give ear to a project, which proved the ruin of his bright hopes, and led him into a fatal snare. He had marched up the eastern bank of the St. Lawrence as far as Longueuil, nearly opposite to Montreal, and was pressing on towards St. John's, according to the tenor of his letter. Between Longueuil and Laprairie he fell in with Major Brown, who was at the head of an advanced party of Americans and Canadians. Brown requested him to stop, took him aside, and proposed to unite their forces in an attack on Montreal, representing the defenceless condition of the town, and the ease with which it might be taken by surprise. Relying on the knowledge and fidelity of Brown, and ever ready to pursue adventures and court danger, Colonel Allen assented to the proposal, and the plan was matured on the spot. Allen was to return to Longueuil, procure canoes, and pass over with his party in the night a little below Montreal; and Brown at the same time was to cross above the town, with about two hundred men, and the attack was to be made simultaneously at opposite points.

True to his engagement, Allen crossed the river on the night of the 24th of September, with eighty Canadians and thirty Americans, and landed them undiscovered before daylight, although the canoes were so few and small, that it was necessary to pass back and forth three times in conveying over the whole party. The wind was high and the waves rough, which added to the peril of an adventure sufficiently hazardous in itself. The day dawned, and Colonel Allen waited with impatience for the signal of Major Brown's division having landed above

the town. He set guards in the road to stop all persons that were passing, and thus prevent intelligence of his approach from being carried into Montreal. When the morning was considerably advanced and no signal had been given, it was evident that Major Brown had not crossed the river. Colonel Allen would willingly have retreated, but it was now too late. The canoes would hold only one third of his party. A person detained by his guard had escaped and gone into the town, and presently armed men were seen coming out. He posted his men in the best manner he could, and prepared to maintain his ground. About forty British regulars, two or three hundred Canadians, and a few Indians, constituted the assailing force. The skirmish continued an hour and three quarters, when Colonel Allen agreed to surrender to the principal British officer, upon being promised honorable terms. His men had all deserted him in the conflict, except thirty-eight, who were included in his capitulation. Seven of these were wounded. They were treated civilly by the officers while marching into Montreal, and till they were delivered over to General Prescott, whose conduct is described as having been peculiarly harsh, and in all respects unworthy of an officer of his rank. His language was coarse and his manner unfeeling. After conversing with his prisoner, and asking him if he was the same Colonel Allen, who had taken Ticonderoga, he burst into a passion, threatened him with a halter at Tyburn, and ordered him to be bound hand and foot in irons on board the Gaspee schooner of war. In this situation, Colonel Allen wrote the following letter to General Prescott.

“HONORABLE SIR,

“In the wheel of transitory events I find myself a prisoner and in irons. Probably your Honor has certain reasons to me inconceivable, though I challenge an instance of this sort of economy of the Americans during the late war towards any officers of the crown. On my part, I have to assure your Honor, that when I had the command and took Captain Delaplace and Lieutenant Felton, with the garrison at Ticonderoga, I treated them

with every mark of friendship and generosity, the evidence of which is notorious even in Canada. I have only to add, that I expect an honorable and humane treatment, as an officer of my rank and merit should have, and subscribe myself your Honor's most obedient humble servant,

“ETHAN ALLEN.”*

No answer to this letter was returned. Colonel Allen's irons were massive, and so fastened as to give him constant pain. He was handcuffed, and his ankles were confined in shackles, to which was attached a bar of iron eight feet long. In this plight he was thrust into the lowest part of the ship, where he had neither a bed nor any article of furniture, except a chest, on which by the favor of some humane sailor he was allowed to sit, or lie on his back, the only recumbent posture that his irons would suffer him to assume. His companions in arms, who capitulated on the same terms as their leader, were fastened together in pairs with handcuffs and chains.

For more than five weeks, the prisoners were kept in this manner on board the *Gaspee*, treated as criminals, and subject to every indignity from the officers, and from persons who came to see them out of curiosity. After the repulse of Governor Carleton at Longueuil, by Warner and his brave Green Mountain Boys, the state of affairs in Montreal began to put on a more doubtful aspect. It was deemed advisable to send off the prisoners, that there might be no danger of a rescue, in case of the sudden approach of General Montgomery's army, which might be daily expected.

In a short time Colonel Allen found himself at Quebec, where he was transferred to another vessel, and then to a third, a change most favorable to his health and comfort.

* The account of the capture of *Ticonderoga*, which has been given above, and of the subsequent events of Colonel Allen's life till he was taken prisoner, has been drawn entirely from original manuscripts, in the public offices of Massachusetts and New York, and among General Washington's papers. The particulars respecting his captivity are chiefly gathered from his own "*Narrative*," written and published shortly after his release.

Captain Littlejohn, the commander of the last vessel, was particularly civil, generous, and friendly, ordering his irons to be knocked off, taking him to his own table, and declaring that no brave man should be ill used on board his ship. Unhappily this respite from suffering was of short continuance. Arnold appeared at Point Levi, on the 9th of November, with an armed force, descending from the forests like an apparition of enchantment in some fairy tale. The news of the surrender of St. John's and the capitulation of Montreal to General Montgomery came soon afterwards. These events were looked upon as the harbinger of greater disasters, in the downfall of Quebec, and the conquest of the whole province. In anticipation of the fate of St. John's and Montreal, a vessel of war called the *Adamant*, had been got in readiness to carry despatches to the government. The prisoners were put on board this vessel, and consigned to the charge of Brook Watson, a merchant of Montreal. Several other loyalists were passengers, and among them Guy Johnson.

Under his new master, Colonel Allen soon discovered, that he was not to expect the urbanity and kindness of Captain Littlejohn. His handcuffs were replaced, and he and thirty-three other prisoners, manacled in the same manner, were confined together in a single apartment, enclosed with oak plank, which they were not suffered to leave during the whole passage of nearly forty days. Where there is so much to censure in the hardened insensibility, which could inflict sufferings like these on prisoners, whose only crime was their bravery, it should be mentioned as one softening feature, that as much provision was served to them as they wanted, and a gill of rum a day to each man; so that the negative merit of not adding starvation to confinement, insults, and chains, should be allowed to have its full weight. The name of Brook Watson had already become notorious. Three or four months previously to his sailing for England, he had been at New York and Philadelphia, visited many persons of distinction, especially members of the Continental Congress, and conducted himself in such a man-

ner as to leave the impression, that he was a warm friend to the American cause. Immediately after his return to Montreal, letters written by him to persons in General Gage's army at Boston were intercepted, which proved him to have deserved the character rather of a spy, than a friend. He had art, insincerity, and talent. He was the same Brook Watson, who was afterwards Lord Mayor of London.

It was a joyful day for the prisoners when the *Adamant* entered the harbor of Falmouth. Their long and close confinement had become extremely irksome and painful. They were now brought on deck, and permitted to breathe the fresh air, and were cheered with the light of day. In a short time they were landed, and marched to Pendennis Castle, about a mile from the town. Great crowds were attracted to witness so novel a sight; and if all the prisoners were habited in the costume of Colonel Allen, it is no wonder that their curiosity was excited. While he was on his recruiting tour he had clothed himself in a Canadian dress, consisting of a short, fawn-skin, double-breasted jacket, a vest and breeches of sagathy, worsted stockings, shoes, a plain shirt, and a red worsted cap. In this garb he was taken; and, as it had never been changed during his captivity, he was exhibited in it to the gazing multitudes of Falmouth. Robinson Crusoe on his island could hardly have presented a more grotesque appearance. The people stared, but no insult was offered to the prisoners on their way to the castle.

In this new abode, they found their condition much improved, being lodged in an airy room, and indulged with the luxury of bunks and straw. Their irons were still kept on, but they were kindly treated, and furnished with fresh and wholesome provisions. Colonel Allen was particularly favored by the commandant of the castle, who sent him a breakfast and dinner every day from his own table, and now and then a bottle of wine. Another benevolent gentleman supplied his board with suppers, and in the article of good living his star of fortune had probably never been more propitious. The renown of

his adventure at Ticonderoga had gone before him; and as that fortress had a notoriety in England, on account of its importance in former wars, the man who had conquered it was looked upon as no common person, though now in chains and stigmatized with the name of rebel. He was permitted to walk on the parade-ground within the walls of the castle, where many respectable people from the neighborhood paid him a visit, and conversed with him on various topics. His bold and independent manner, fluency of language, and strong native talent, contrasted with the singularity of his appearance, in his Canadian dress and handcuffs, awakened the surprise and contributed to the amusement of his auditors. Though in bondage, and completely at the mercy of his enemies, he was eloquent on the theme of patriotism, boasted the courage and firmness of his countrymen, and pledged himself that they would never cease to resist oppression, till their just claims were allowed, and their liberty secured. These political harangues, if they had no other effect, served to lighten the weight of his chains, and to give a seeming impulse to the leaden wings of time.

Notwithstanding the comparative amelioration of his circumstances, Colonel Allen's mind was not perfectly at ease in regard to the future. General Prescott's hint about his gracing a halter at Tyburn, rested upon his thoughts, and gave him some uneasiness amidst the uncertain prospects now before him. But despondency and fear made no part of his character, and, even when hope failed, his fortitude was triumphant. Prepared for the worst that might happen, he bethought himself of trying the effect of stratagem. He asked permission to write a letter to the Continental Congress, which was granted. He depicted in vivid colors the treatment he had received from the beginning of his captivity, but advised the Congress not to retaliate, till the fate that awaited him in England should be known, and then to execute the law of retaliation not in proportion to the small influence of his character in America, but to the extent demanded by the importance of the cause for which he had suffered. The despatch was finished, and

handed over for inspection to the officer, who had permitted him to write. This officer went to him the next day, and reprimanded him for what he called the impudence of inditing such an epistle. "Do you think we are fools in England," said he, "and would send your letter to Congress with instructions to retaliate on our own people? I have sent your letter to Lord North." This was precisely the destination for which the writer intended it, and he felt a secret satisfaction that his artifice had succeeded. He wished the ministry to know his situation and his past sufferings, and to reflect, that his countrymen had it in their power to retaliate in full measure any acts of violence meditated against his person. A letter on these subjects, written directly to a minister by a prisoner in irons, would not have been forwarded.

Whatever ideas the ministry may have entertained when the prisoners were landed, it was soon perceived that lenient measures were the most advisable. The opposition made a handle of an act so outrageous, as that of treating as malefactors and chaining men, who had been taken bravely fighting in a cause, for which a whole continent was in arms; and it was now too late to talk of hanging the revolted colonists on the plea of rebellion. Moreover, it was known, that St. John's and Montreal had surrendered to Montgomery, and that the very officers, who had captured these men and sent them to England, were in the hands of the Americans. It was furthermore rumored, that certain gentlemen had resolved to try the effect of the *Habeas Corpus* act in setting the prisoners at liberty, or at least in bringing them to a trial before a proper magistrate, to ascertain whether they were legally guilty of any offence, which justified their confinement. To silence popular clamor, and prevent rash consequences, the government determined to regard them as prisoners of war, and to send them back to America. For this purpose they were ordered on board the *Solebay* frigate, where their irons were taken off, after they had worn them about three months and a half.

Just at this time the grand armament was preparing to sail from Ireland, under Sir Peter Parker and Lord Corn-

wallis, with troops to act against North Carolina, according to a plan formed by the ministry in consequence of the representations of Governor Martin, that a numerous body of loyalists was ready to take up arms in that colony, as soon as they should be encouraged by the cooperation of a sufficient force from Great Britain. The troops were to be put on board in the harbor of Cork, where the vessels destined for the expedition rendezvoused, and among them the Solebay frigate. From the captain of this ship Colonel Allen had early proofs, that the prisoners were to expect neither lenity nor civil treatment. His first salutation was to order them in an imperious tone to leave the deck and never appear there again, adding that the deck was the "place for gentlemen to walk." Allen was conducted down to the cable-tier, where he was left to accommodate himself as well as he could. Being ill of a cold, and his health much impaired by his late sufferings, the natural buoyancy of his spirits failed him in this comfortless abode, and he felt himself, as he has expressed it, "in an evil case," imagining his enemies to have devised this scheme of effecting, by a slow and clandestine process, what it was impolitic for them to do in the open face of day with the eyes of the public upon them.

His despondency, however, gradually wore off, and, two days afterwards, wanting fresh air and exercise, he resolved to try the experiment of appearing on deck, having washed, shaved, and adjusted his dress in the best manner his scanty wardrobe would allow. The captain saw him, and demanded in an angry voice, if he had not been ordered not to come on deck. Colonel Allen replied, that he had heard such an order from him, but at the same time he had said, "the deck was the place for gentlemen to walk," and as he was Colonel Allen and a gentleman, he claimed the privilege of his rank. Whether influenced by this kind of logic, or by some other reason, the captain contented himself with uttering an oath, and cautioning the prisoner never to be seen on the same side of the ship with him. There was encouragement even in this harsh greeting, since it did not amount to an absolute prohibition; and, by taking care

to keep at a proper distance from the captain, he was afterwards permitted to walk the deck, though sometimes capriciously and rudely ordered off. His condition below was somewhat amended by the generosity of the master-at-arms, an Irishman, who offered him a place in a little berth fitted up for himself with canvass between the decks, in which he was kindly allowed by the occupant to remain till the ship arrived in America.

When it was known at Cork, that Colonel Allen and his fellow-prisoners were in the harbor on board the *Solebay*, several gentlemen of that city determined to convey to them substantial evidences of their sympathy. A full suit of clothes was sent to each of the privates; and Colonel Allen's wardrobe was replenished with fine broadcloth sufficient for two suits, eight shirts and stocks ready made, several pairs of silk and worsted hose, shoes, and two beaver hats, one of which was richly adorned with gold lace. Nor did the bounty of the philanthropists of Cork end here. Although they had clothed the naked, they did not consider the work of benevolence finished till they had fed the hungry. A profuse supply of sea-stores came on board for Colonel Allen, consisting of sugar, coffee, tea, chocolate, pickled beef, fat turkeys, wines, old spirits, and other articles suited for a voyage. Each of the privates also received tea and sugar. Added to this, a gentleman visited Colonel Allen, in behalf of the donors, and offered him fifty guineas, which, after the other tokens of their munificence, he declined to accept, retaining only seven guineas as a relief in case of pressing necessity.

The above articles were admitted on board by the second lieutenant, while his superiors were on shore; but when the captain returned and was informed what had been done, he was angry, and swore that "the American rebels should not be feasted at this rate by the rebels of Ireland." He took away all the liquors, except a small quantity, which was secreted by the connivance of the second lieutenant, and he appropriated to the use of the crew all the tea and sugar, that had been given to the privates. The clothing they were permitted to keep.

The fleet put to sea from Cork on the 13th of February, consisting of forty-three sail, with about two thousand five hundred troops. The weather was fine, and the effect was beautiful as the ships sailed out of the harbor; but they had been at sea only five days, when a terrible storm arose, which raged with unabated violence for twenty-four hours, dispersed the fleet, and shattered several of the transports so much, that they were obliged to put back to Cork and the southern ports of England. The *Solebay* received no essential injury, and she proceeded on her voyage. Before they left Cork the prisoners were divided and assigned to three different ships. This gave their leader some uneasiness, for they had been brave, and true to the cause in which they suffered, and had borne all their calamities with a becoming fortitude. It turned out, however, that they were better treated on board of the other ships, than they had been while with him. The only incident worthy of being commemorated, which happened to Colonel Allen during the voyage, was the change of his Canadian costume for one fabricated from the superfine broadcloths received in Cork. This metamorphosis was effected by the aid of the captain's tailor, whose services were granted on this occasion as a special favor. Clad in his new suit, with his silk stockings and laced hat, the prisoner made a more respectable figure on deck, and enjoyed privileges, which at first had been denied.

It was with some regret, therefore, that, after his arrival at Cape Fear River, in North Carolina, he found himself transferred to the *Mercury* frigate, the captain of which he describes as tyrannical, narrow-minded, and destitute of the common feelings of humanity. The only consolation in this change of circumstances was, that his original companions in captivity were brought together again on board this ship, except one who had died on the passage from Ireland, and another who had escaped by an extraordinary exertion of swimming, after the fleet arrived on the coast, and who safely reached his home in New England. The captain ordered the purser not to let the prisoners have any thing from his store, and

forbade the surgeon's attending them in sickness. Every night they were shut down in the cable-tier, and indeed they passed a miserable existence both day and night, being told, when they complained of such treatment, that it was a matter of little consequence, as they would be hanged when they arrived in Halifax.

The Mercury sailed from Cape Fear River on the 20th of May, and touched at the Hook off New York the first week in June. At this time, General Washington with the American army had possession of New York, and the British shipping lay in the outer harbor near the Hook. The Mercury remained here three days, during which time Governor Tryon, and Mr. Kemp, the attorney-general of New York under the old government, came on board. Tryon eyed Allen as they were walking on different parts of the deck, but did not speak to him. It is natural to presume, that the late governor saw, with a secret satisfaction, the man in safe custody, who had caused him so much unavailing trouble in writing proclamations. Kemp was the same attorney, whom Allen had met at Albany, when he attended the court there as agent for the patentees of the New Hampshire Grants. No man had been more active in pressing the New York claims, or in stirring up persecutions against the Green Mountain Boys; and of course no one had acquired among them a more odious notoriety. This accidental meeting with Ethan Allen must have called up peculiar associations in the minds of both the governor and the attorney-general.

The Mercury arrived in Halifax after a short passage from New York. The prisoners were put into a sloop, then lying in the harbor, and a guard watched them day and night. In this confinement they were served with so scanty an allowance of provisions, that they suffered cruelly from the distress of hunger, which, added to attacks of scurvy, made their condition more deplorable than it had been at any former time. They were still under the direction of the captain of the Mercury, to whom they wrote letter after letter, imploring medical aid and other assistance, but in vain. The captain was deaf to their

calls, took no notice of their complaints, and, to get rid of their importunities, he ordered the guards to bring him no more letters. Their case seemed now reduced to the verge of despair. Allen resolved, however, to make one more effort. He wrought so far upon the compassion of one of the guards, as to persuade him to take a letter directed to Governor Arbuthnot, which was faithfully communicated. Touched with the claims of humanity, the governor immediately sent a surgeon to the prisoners, with instructions to administer such relief to the sick as was necessary, and also an officer, to ascertain and report the grounds of their complaint. This officer discharged his duty well, and the result was, that the next day they were removed from their dismal quarters on board the prison-sloop to the jail in Halifax.

To seek the asylum of a jail is not a usual experiment for attaining happiness. In the present instance, however, it was a fortunate one for the sufferers, inasmuch as it was the means of relieving them from the pains of hunger, and procuring for them the attendance of a physician. In other respects their condition was little amended, since more than thirty persons were shut up in one room, several of them in various stages of sickness, with hardly a single accommodation, that could in any manner contribute to their comfort or convenience. Some of Allen's fellow-prisoners had been sent to the hospital, and others employed in the public works, so that only thirteen of those taken in Canada now remained with him.

Among the American prisoners, whom Allen met in Halifax jail, was Mr. James Lovell of Boston, a gentleman eminent for his learning and character, who, after his release, was many years a member of the Continental Congress. His zeal in the cause of his country, and frankness in avowing his sentiments, had made him an object of suspicion and odium to the British commander in Boston, where he was first imprisoned; and, when that city was evacuated, he was carried into captivity, and locked up in the jail of Halifax, in the same apartment with prisoners of the lowest class.

There were now together four American officers,

besides Mr. Lovell, who, by the custom of war and the practice then existing in regard to British prisoners taken by the Americans, had a right to their parole; but this was never granted. They were kept in close confinement till orders came from General Howe to send them to New York. Partial negotiations had commenced between General Washington and General Howe for the exchange of prisoners, and certain principles had been laid down, by the mutual agreement of the parties, as a basis upon which to proceed. Moreover, Congress had instructed General Washington to make a special application in favor of Mr. Lovell and Colonel Allen, proposing to exchange Governor Skene for the former and an officer of equal rank for the latter. The legislature of Connecticut had also interfered in behalf of Allen, and eighteen of the prisoners taken with him, who were natives of that state, and solicited Congress and the Commander-in-chief to use all practicable means for effecting their release. The same had been done by the Massachusetts legislature in the case of Mr. Lovell.

After the intelligence of Allen's being in Halifax reached his friends, a project was formed by his brother, Levi Allen, to visit him there and attempt to procure his liberty. The state of Connecticut voted money to pay the expense of this enterprise, but the arrival of the prisoners in New York rendered it unnecessary.

The Lark frigate, on board of which were Mr. Lovell, Colonel Allen, and their companions, sailed from Halifax about the middle of October. Luckily they found themselves at last under an officer, Captain Smith, who treated them with the politeness of a gentleman, and with the feelings of a man capable of sympathizing in the distresses of the unfortunate. The first interview is thus described by Colonel Allen. "When I came on deck, he met me with his hand, welcomed me to his ship, invited me to dine with him that day, and assured me that I should be treated as a gentleman, and that he had given orders that I should be treated with respect by the ship's crew. This was so unexpected and sudden a transition, that it drew tears from my eyes, which all the

ill usages I had before met with were not able to produce; nor could I at first hardly speak, but soon recovered myself, and expressed my gratitude for so unexpected a favor, and let him know, that I felt anxiety of mind in reflecting, that his situation and mine was such, that it was not probable it would ever be in my power to return the favor. Captain Smith replied, that he had no reward in view, but only treated me as a gentleman ought to be treated. He said, this is a mutable world, and one gentleman never knows but it may be in his power to help another."

An opportunity soon occurred of verifying this last remark. They had not been at sea many days, when it was discovered that a conspiracy was on foot to destroy the captain and the principal officers, and seize the ship. An American captain, who had commanded an armed vessel, and been recently taken prisoner, was the chief conspirator. He revealed his designs to Colonel Allen and Mr. Lovell, requesting their cooperation in bringing over the other prisoners, about thirty in number, and telling them that several of the crew were ready to join in the plot. It was known that there were thirty-five thousand pounds in money on board, and the plan of the conspirators was to take the ship into an American port, where they expected to divide the booty according to the usual rules of captures. Without waiting to discuss the laws of war, or to reason about the infamy and criminality of such an act with men, who were prepared to execute it, Colonel Allen declared with his usual decision and vehemence, that he would not listen a moment to such a scheme, that, in its mildest character, it was a base and wicked return for the kind treatment they had received, and that he would at every personal hazard defend Captain Smith's life. This rebuff was unexpected by the conspirators, and it threw them into a distressing dilemma, since the fear of detection was now as appalling to them as the danger of their original enterprise. They then requested him to remain neutral, and let them proceed in their own way, but this he peremptorily refused; and he finally succeeded in quelling the

conspiracy, by adhering to his resolution, and promising, that, as he had been consulted in confidence, he would not divulge the matter, if the leaders would pledge themselves instantly to abandon the design. In the present state of things they were glad to accept such terms. At the conclusion of this affair, Colonel Allen was forcibly reminded of the words of Captain Smith.

Before the end of October, the Lark frigate anchored in the harbor of New York, and the prisoners were removed to the Glasgow transport. Mr. Lovell was exchanged in a few days for Governor Skene; and Colonel Allen, after remaining four or five weeks in the transport, where he met with very civil usage, was landed in New York and admitted to his parole. Here he had an opportunity of witnessing the wretched condition and extreme sufferings of the American prisoners, who had been taken in the battle on Long Island and at Fort Washington, and who were left to perish of hunger, cold, and sickness in the churches of New York. He speaks of these scenes as the most painful and revolting, that could be conceived. Indeed numerous concurring testimonies have established it as a fact, of which not a shadow of doubt can now be entertained, that human misery has seldom been seen in such heart-rending forms, or under circumstances so aggravating. The motives of the enemy for practising or permitting cruelties so little consonant to the dictates of humanity, the customs of civilized warfare, and every principle of sound policy, are not a fit theme of inquiry in this narrative. The fact itself is an indelible stain, deep and dark, in the character of Sir William Howe, which no array of private virtues, of military talents, or public acts, will hide or obscure. The picture drawn by Allen, colored as it may be by the ardor of his feelings, is vivid and impressive, and its accuracy is confirmed by the declarations of several other persons, who also related what they saw.

While he was on his parole in New York, a British officer of rank and importance sent for him to his lodgings and told him that his fidelity, though in a wrong cause, had made an impression upon General Howe, who was dis-

posed to show him a favor, and to advance him to the command of a regiment of loyalists, if he would join the service, holding out to him at the same time brilliant prospects of promotion and money during the war and large tracts of land at its close. Allen replied, "that if by faithfulness he had recommended himself to General Howe, he should be loath by unfaithfulness to lose the general's good opinion;" and as to the lands, he was by no means satisfied, that the King would possess a sufficient quantity in the United States at the end of the war to redeem any pledges on that score. The officer sent him away as an incorrigible and hopeless subject.

In the month of January, 1777, he was directed with other prisoners to take up his abode on the western side of Long Island, being still on parole, and allowed the usual freedom under such circumstances, within certain prescribed limits. Here he remained, in a condition of comparative comfort, till August, when he was suddenly apprehended, environed with guards, conducted to the provost-jail in New York, and put into solitary confinement. This act was on the pretence of his having infringed his parole, which he affirmed was untrue, and the whole proceeding unjust and malicious. But the cause was now of little moment, since he was chiefly concerned with the effect. For the space of three days he was immured in his cell without a morsel of food. The sergeant, who stood at the door, refused to be moved by offers of money or appeals to his compassion, and repelled every advance with a soldier's oath and the brief reply, that he would obey his orders. The pains of hunger became extreme, but they were at last assuaged; and in a few days he was transferred to another apartment of the jail, where he found himself in company with more than twenty American officers.

From this place he was not removed till the end of his captivity. After being shut up for more than eight months in the provost-jail, a confinement of which the prisoners were ever accustomed to speak with disgust and horror, the day of liberty dawned upon him.

Neither his countrymen, generally, nor the supreme

council of the nation, had at any time lost sight of his sufferings, or ceased to express their sympathy. Congress had on several occasions proposed his exchange; but it was prevented after his arrival in New York by the difficulties, which embarrassed and defeated all attempts for effecting a general cartel between Washington and Howe. It was finally agreed, that he should be exchanged for Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell; and on the 3d of May, 1778, he was taken from prison and conducted under guard to a sloop in the harbor, and thence to Staten Island. Here he was politely received by the British commander, and kindly treated for two days, when Colonel Campbell arrived from Elizabethtown, under the charge of Mr. Elias Boudinot, the American Commissary-General of prisoners. It may easily be conceived that the meeting was one of mutual congratulation and joy. The two released captives drank a glass of wine together in celebration of the event, and Colonel Allen returned immediately with Mr. Boudinot to Elizabethtown.

His feelings, on once more touching the soil and breathing the air of freedom, will be left to the imagination of the reader. He was now restored to his country, the object of a patriotic devotion, that neither the cruelty nor the enticements of the enemy could diminish; in whose cause he had suffered a captivity of two years and seven months, under all the rigor of chains, hunger and harsh usage. Insensibility made no part of his nature, and the soul must be callous indeed, that would not thrill with emotion at the recollections of the past, the realities of the present, and the visions of the future, that now thronged upon his mind.

Notwithstanding the strong associations and tender ties, which drew him towards his home and friends, the impulse of gratitude was the first he obeyed. The lively interest taken in his condition by the Commander-in-chief, and his efforts to procure his release, were known to him, and he resolved to repair without delay to headquarters, and express in person his sense of the obligation. The army was at Valley Forge, and as he advanced into the country on his way to that place, he

was every where greeted by the people with demonstrations of strong interest, not unmixed with curiosity at seeing a man, the incidents of whose life had given him renown, and whose fate while in the hands of the enemy had been a subject of public concern. General Washington received him cordially, and introduced him to the principal officers in camp, who showed him many civilities.

Having thus discharged a duty, which he believed to be demanded by justice and gratitude as the first fruit of his liberty, and having remained a few days only at Valley Forge, he turned his face towards the Green Mountains, and hastened to join his family and former associates. From Valley Forge to Fishkill he travelled in company with General Gates, who was proceeding to take command of the army on the North River. In the evening of the last day of May, Colonel Allen arrived in Bennington, unexpected at that time by his friends, and a general sensation was immediately spread throughout the neighborhood. The people gathered round him, and, with a delight which could be realized only under circumstances so peculiar, he witnessed the joy that beamed from every countenance, and heard the accents of a hearty welcome uttered by every voice. It was a season of festivity with the Green Mountain Boys, and the same evening three cannon were fired, as an audible expression of their gladness. Nor did the scene of hilarity end with that day. The next morning, Colonel Herrick, who had distinguished himself by his bravery under the veteran Stark, in the battle of Bennington, ordered fourteen discharges of cannon, "thirteen for the United States and one for young Vermont," as a renewed and more ample compliment to the early champion and faithful associate of the Green Mountain Boys.

Congress was equally mindful of the services and of the just claims of Colonel Allen. As soon as he was released from captivity, they granted him a brevet commission of colonel in the Continental army, "in reward of his fortitude, firmness, and zeal in the cause of his country, manifested during the course of his long and

cruel captivity, as well as on former occasions." It was moreover resolved, that he should be entitled, during the time he was a prisoner, to all the benefits and privileges of a lieutenant-colonel in the service of the United States. That is, he was to receive the pay and other emoluments of that rank. As the brevet commission of colonel did not entitle him to pay, he was allowed seventy-five dollars a month from the date of that commission, till he should be called into actual service. How long this allowance was continued, I have no means of ascertaining. It does not appear, that he ever joined the Continental army. From the above proofs, however, it is evident, that the proceedings of Congress in regard to him were generous and honorable, manifesting at the same time a proper sense of his past sufferings, and respect for his character.

During his absence, important changes had taken place in the affairs of the New Hampshire Grants. The inhabitants had made a gradual progress in maturing and establishing a new form of government, having declared their territory an independent state, under the name of *Vermont*, framed and adopted a new constitution, and organized the various branches of government by the election of a governor and other civil officers. In effecting these objects they had encountered numerous obstacles, both from the internal distractions caused by the invasion of Burgoyne's army, and from the machinations and adverse influence of external foes. The embers of the old feud with New York were stirred up afresh, when the people of Vermont presumed to talk of independence and a separation from that state. Governor Clinton, and several other prominent individuals in New York, had been warmly enlisted at an early day against the pretensions of the Green Mountain Boys; and although they were far from abetting or vindicating the rash measures of the colonial administration, yet they were strenuous in asserting the supremacy of New York over the whole territory as far as Connecticut River, and in demanding from the people an obedience to the laws of that state. Hence it followed, that the controversy was only narrowed in its extent, but not at all changed in its principles.

Ethan Allen arrived just in time to buckle on his armor, and enter with renovated vigor into a contest, in which he had been so conspicuous and successful a combatant from its very beginning, and with all the tactics of which he was perfectly familiar. Governor Clinton, by the authority of the New York Legislature, had recently sent out a proclamation, reprobating and annulling the bloody statute heretofore mentioned, acknowledging that attempts contrary to justice and policy had been made to dispossess the original patentees of their lands, and putting forth certain overtures for a reconciliation of differences, but taking care to assert the absolute power of New York over the persons and property of such, as did not choose to accept these proposals. According to the tenor of these overtures, the patents of the governor of New Hampshire were all to be confirmed, but a continuance of the quitrents was claimed from the purchasers, as under the colonial system, and the unsettled lands were reserved as the property of the state.

The grand feature of the proclamation was the assumption of supremacy, and this was the point most essential to the people of Vermont, since it struck at the root of their political existence. The overtures were dressed up in such a manner, as to have a plausible appearance, and to be likely to lead astray those persons, who thought less of preserving their political rights, than of the immediate security of their possessions. The more wise and wary, however, took the alarm, and among these was Ethan Allen. He saw a fatal danger lurking beneath a show of proffered indulgences and fair professions. The cautious Trojan distrusted the Greeks even in their acts of apparent generosity; and the leader of the Green Mountain Boys looked with an eye of equal suspicion on the spontaneous advances of the New Yorkers. In short, every proposal, come from what quarter it might, which did not imply the entire independence of Vermont, as a separate state and government, was in his view to be disdained and repelled.

In this spirit he wrote an address to the inhabitants of Vermont, stating briefly the grounds of their claims

to the privilege of self-government, and exhorting them not to relax for a moment in their efforts to attain the end for which they had struggled so long and so hard. A large part of his address was taken up in animadverting on Governor Clinton's proclamation, in which, as with a good deal of ingenuity and force he made it appear, the overtures of New York held out to them nothing which they did not already possess, and would deprive them of the dearest of earthly treasures, their liberty. His arguments and his mode of stating them were suited to the people whom he addressed, and without doubt produced the desired effect of confirming their confidence in themselves, and inciting them to union and perseverance.

Sometimes he touches on personal incidents. Alluding to the bloody act of proscription, which had been passed under Governor Tryon, he observes; "In the lifetime of that act I was called by the Yorkers an outlaw; and afterwards by the British I was called a rebel; and I humbly conceive, that there was as much propriety in the one name as the other; and I verily believe, that the King's commissioners would now be as willing to pardon me for the sin of rebellion, providing I would afterwards be subject to Great Britain, as the legislature above mentioned, provided I would be subject to New York; and I must confess I had as lief be a subject of the one as the other, and it is well known I have had great experience with them both."

In his concluding remarks, on the overtures in the proclamation, he says, still addressing himself to the people, "The main inducement I had in answering them was, to draw a full and convincing proof from the same, that the shortest, best, and most eligible, I had almost said the only possible way of vacating those New York interfering grants, is to maintain inviolable the supremacy of the legislative authority of the independent State of Vermont. This, at one stroke, overturns every New York scheme, which may be calculated for our ruin, makes us freemen, confirms our property, and puts it fairly in our power to help ourselves in the enjoyment of the great blessings of

a free, uncorrupted, and virtuous civil government. You have fought, bled, and hitherto conquered, and are as deserving of these good fruits of your valor, hazard, and toil, as any people under heaven.

“ You have experienced every species of oppression, which the old government of New York, with a Tryon at their head, could invent and inflict; and it is manifest, that the new government are minded to follow in their steps. Happy is it for you, that you are fitted for the severest trials. You have been wonderfully supported and carried through thus far in your opposition to that government. Formerly you had every thing to fear from it; but now, you have little to fear, for your public character is established, and your cause known to be just. In your early struggles with that government you acquired a reputation of bravery; this gave you a relish for martial glory, and the British invasion opened an ample field for its display, and you have gone on conquering and to conquer until tall grenadiers are dismayed and tremble at your approach. Your frontier situation often obliges you to be in arms and battles; and by repeated marching, scoutings, and manly exercises, your nerves have become strong to strike the mortal blow. What enemy of the State of Vermont, or what New York land-monopolizer, shall be able to stand before you in the day of your fierce anger!”

By harangues like this, abounding more in strong and pointed expressions, than in good taste or a graceful diction, he wrought upon the minds of the people, and inclined them to his wishes. But it should be said to his praise, considering the scenes he passed through, that on no occasion did he encourage or countenance laxness in government, or disobedience to the laws and magistrates, recognised as such by the people themselves. “ Any one,” he remarks, “ who is acquainted with mankind and things, must know, that it is impossible to manage the political matters of this country without the assistance of civil government. A large body of people destitute of it, is like a ship at sea, without a helm or mariner, tossed by impetuous waves. We could not enjoy

domestic peace and security, set aside the consequences of a British war and the New York strife, without civil regulations. The two last considerations do, in the most striking manner, excite us to strengthen and confirm the government already set up by the authority of the people, which is the fountain of all temporal power, and from which the subjects of the State of Vermont have already received such signal advantages." These sentiments he avowed repeatedly, and even when he was stirring up and leading out the mobs of Bennington, he always declared it was in self-defence, the result of a necessity forced upon them by their enemies; and he never ceased to recommend order, good faith, and submission to the laws, as essential to the prosperity and happiness of the community.

We here discover, in fact, the explanation of the successful progress of the people in rearing up a political fabric, which became solid and durable, although for several years they were apparently in a state of confusion, if not of anarchy. But this was more in appearance than reality. There were no internal broils or commotions, that in any degree disturbed the general order of society. United in one great object of resisting a common foe, and impelled by the same interests and aims, they had few motives for dissensions among themselves; and this union not only pointed out the necessity of rules of government, but afforded opportunities to frame and adopt them in such a manner, that they were acceptable and efficient. The inhabitants of the Grants were mostly natives of the New England colonies, and possessed a similarity in their sentiments and habits, which enabled them to harmonize the more easily in regulating public concerns.

Committees of safety and conventions were the contrivances to which they resorted, for setting in motion and sustaining the machinery of government. These were organized on the strictest republican principles, being created and constituted by the people themselves, acting at first voluntarily in their individual capacity, and agreeing to be controlled by the voice of a majority. Upon this basis the committees were intrusted with all the

power requisite to form regulations for local purposes. The conventions attained the same objects in a broader sphere, and with higher authority. The system was peculiarly felicitous in being adapted to communities of every description, and to small numbers as well as large. Its principles were likewise the elements of the best constructed governments; and hence the people were gradually trained up in the art of self-control, and qualified to assume and maintain the character of an independent state, even while embarrassed by the hostility and interference of the neighboring powers. It is remarkable, that the plan of conventions and committees, which was adopted by all the states at the beginning of the Revolution, had previously been eight years in practice among the first settlers of Vermont.

Considering the part, which Ethan Allen had acted before his captivity, and the consistency of his conduct, it was to be expected, that he would embark with his accustomed zeal in a cause, which had now acquired a new importance, and especially as it was still involved in the old quarrel with New York. As his countrymen had not forgotten the military rank to which they raised him in the season of their former perils, nor the services he rendered at the head of the Green Mountain Boys, and were disposed to profit again by his sword, as well as by his pen and his counsels, he was soon after his return appointed general and commander of the militia of the state. A stronger proof of confidence could not have been shown, more particularly at this time, when an invasion of the British from Canada might at any moment be apprehended, and when the delicate relations subsisting between Vermont and two adjoining states threatened an ultimate resort to arms as a possible consequence, either to quell internal factions, or to resist aggressions from abroad.

Meantime an incident occurred, which encumbered the affairs of Vermont with other difficulties. For certain political reasons, sixteen townships in the western parts of New Hampshire, bordering on Connecticut river, formed a combination to desert from that state and join themselves to Vermont. They sent a petition for that

purpose to the Vermont legislature; but it was at first no further acted upon than to refer it to the people. At the next meeting of the legislature it was found, that a majority of the legal voters was in favor of admitting the sixteen townships. Hence a new enemy was raised up, and the field of discord enlarged. The governor of New Hampshire wrote a spirited protest to the governor of Vermont, claiming the sixteen townships as a part of that state, and deprecating such an unwarrantable dismemberment. He wrote at the same time to the Continental Congress, demanding their interference in a matter of vital moment, not only to New Hampshire, but to every state in the union, should such a disorganizing act be tolerated as a precedent.

The Vermont Assembly saw their error too late to retract it, since they had referred the subject to the people, and were bound to abide by their decision. To set the thing in as fair a light as it would bear, however, they appointed General Allen a special agent to proceed to Philadelphia, and explain to Congress this point and others requiring explanation, and endeavor, as far as possible, to ascertain the views of the members in regard to the independence of Vermont, and what was to be expected from the future deliberations of that body.

Furnished with proper instructions, General Allen repaired to Philadelphia, and applied himself to the duties of his mission. He soon discovered the undertaking to be surrounded with more difficulties, than he had anticipated. Distinct from the absolute merits of the case, there were in Congress party divisions, emanating from various sources, which prevented any union of action or sentiment on the subject of Vermont. The New England members were mostly in favor of granting independence. This was not less the dictate of sound policy, than of the natural feelings of attachment to people closely allied to themselves and their constituents. Another state in the bosom of New England would of course strengthen the power and influence of the whole in the general scale. It was to be presumed, therefore, that the New England States would second the claims of

Vermont; nor was this presumption weakened by any hereditary good will, that had formerly existed between those States and New York.

Unfortunately, New Hampshire, for the reasons above stated, had been induced to deviate from the line of her neighbors, under the apprehension that her interests were in jeopardy. She was indeed meditating ambitious projects of her own, and forming a design to defeat the pretensions of Vermont, by extending her jurisdiction as far as Lake Champlain, and drawing the whole territory within her limits. She thus placed herself in rivalry with New York, in hostility to Vermont, and at variance with the other adjoining states.

Taking these considerations into view, and the known enmity of the New York members, General Allen's prospects of carrying back a satisfactory report to his friends were faint and discouraging. The southern delegates were indifferent, or only adhered to one side or the other as a means of exerting a party influence. It is doubtless true, also, that several members were conscientiously opposed to any decision by Congress, believing the question not to come within the powers intrusted to that assembly. They argued, that the subject could not rightfully be brought before them in any shape, except in obedience to special instructions from the respective states. Others again denied the power of Congress to interfere at all, affirming that Vermont was in fact independent, and had a right to set up such a scheme of government as she chose. This was a short mode of settling the controversy, but it would hardly satisfy the scruples of New York, or the aspiring hopes of New Hampshire.

On his return from this mission, General Allen presented a report to the legislature of Vermont, containing the result of his observations, in which he gave it as his opinion, "that the New York complaints would never prove of sufficient force in Congress to prevent the establishment of the State of Vermont," and advised the legislature by all means to recede from the union with the sixteen townships, since it could never be approved

by Congress without violating the articles of confederation, by which the rights and original extent of each state were guarantied. On this topic, he spoke with decision and force.

In addition to the general objects of his mission, the visit to Congress was not without advantage to himself and his constituents. It made him intimately acquainted with the views of the delegates in Congress, and with the arguments used by various individuals and parties. He ascertained, likewise, how far policy and individual bias on the one hand, and a regard for the absolute merits of the question on the other, operated in giving a complexion to the national councils.

This knowledge had an important influence on the future proceedings of Vermont. General Allen turned it to an immediate account, and he wrote a treatise vindicating the course hitherto pursued by Vermont, and maintaining the justice of her claim to set up such a form of government, as the people themselves should judge most conducive to their prosperity and happiness.* Mr. Jay said of this book, in writing to a member of Congress when it first appeared, "There is quaintness, impudence and art in it." He might have added, argument and the evidences of a good cause.

In these unwearied labors, for the defence of the rights and dignity of the State, and in superintending its military affairs as commander of the militia, General Allen's time was fully employed. It was at this period, that the British generals in America began to meditate the scheme of bringing Vermont into a union with Canada, by taking advantage of the disputes, which had continued so long and waxed so warm, that it was supposed Vermont had become alienated from Congress and the opposing States, and would be ready to accept tempting overtures from the British. This idea received encouragement from the circumstance, that Congress afforded but a slender de-

* The tract was entitled, *A Vindication of the Opposition of the Inhabitants of Vermont to the Government of New York, and of their Right to form an Independent State*. It was published in 1779, by order of the Governor and Council, or with their approbation.

fence to the frontiers of Vermont, although the governor of Canada was in condition to make a descent with a force sufficient to bear down any opposition, that could be interposed by the whole strength of the State. The first step was to bring over some of the leaders; and as Ethan Allen was the most conspicuous of these, and also the military chieftain, the attempt was made upon him. That his views might be ascertained on this subject, the following letter was written to him by Beverly Robinson, colonel of a regiment of loyal Americans, or, in other words, refugees adhering to the British cause, and embodied in the British army.

“ New York, March 30th, 1780.

“ SIR,

“ I am now undertaking a task, which I hope you will receive with the same good intention, that inclines me to make it. I have often been informed, that you and most of the inhabitants of Vermont are opposed to the wild and chimerical scheme of the Americans, in attempting to separate this continent from Great Britain, and to establish an independent state of their own; and that you would willingly assist in uniting America again to Great Britain, and restoring that happy constitution we have so wantonly and unadvisedly destroyed. If I have been rightly informed, and these should be your sentiments and inclination, I beg you will communicate to me without reserve whatever proposals you would wish to make to the Commander-in-chief, and I here promise that I will faithfully lay them before him according to your directions, and I flatter myself I can do it to as good effect as any person whatever. I can make no proposals to you until I know your sentiments; but I think, upon your taking an active part, and embodying the inhabitants of Vermont in favor of the crown of England to act as the Commander-in-chief shall direct, that you may obtain a separate government, under the King and constitution of England, and the men be formed into regiments under such officers as you shall recommend, and be on the same footing as all the provincial corps are here.

"I am an American myself, and feel much for the distressed situation my poor country is in at present, and am anxious to be serviceable toward restoring it to peace, and that mild and good government we have lost. I have therefore ventured to address myself to you on this subject, and I hope you will see it in a proper light, and be as candid with me. I am inclinable to think, that one reason why this unnatural war has continued so long is, that all the Americans, who wish and think it would be for the interest of this country to have a constitutional and equitable connexion with Great Britain, do not communicate their sentiments to each other so often and so freely as they ought to do.

"In case you should disapprove of my hinting these things to you, and do not choose to make any proposals to government, I hope you will not suffer any insult to be offered to the bearer of this letter; but allow him to return in safety, as I can assure you he is entirely ignorant of its contents; but if you should think it proper to send proposals to me, to be laid before the Commander-in-chief, I do now give you my word, that, if they are not accepted, or complied with by him, of which I will inform you, the matter shall be buried in oblivion between us. I will only add, that if you should think proper to send a friend of your own here, with proposals to the general, he shall be protected and well treated here, and allowed to return whenever he pleases. I can add nothing further at present, but my best wishes for the restoration of the peace and happiness of America.

I am, &c.

"BEVERLY ROBINSON."

This letter, artful and plausible as it was, made no impression upon the patriotism of Ethan Allen. Although written in February, it was not received till July. He immediately sent back the messenger, and in confidence communicated the letter to the governor and a few other friends, who all agreed with him, that it was best to pass it over in silence. That they might not be outdone, however, in the allowable stratagems of war, they be-

thought themselves to turn to a profitable purpose this advance on the part of the enemy. The British were expected soon to appear on Lake Champlain in great force, and it was a thing of essential importance in the present difficult condition of Vermont, to ward off the impending danger. Several prisoners from this State were now in Canada, and it was advised that the governor should write to the commander in Canada, proposing a cartel for an exchange. A letter was accordingly despatched with a flag. The object was to produce delay, and by a finesse to lead the enemy to pursue their ideas of drawing Vermont over to their interest. While this should be fostered, it was not probable they would attack the people whom they wished to conciliate.

No answer was returned, till the enemy's fleet was seen coming up the Lake in a formidable attitude, spreading an alarm far and wide, and apparently threatening an immediate invasion. Many persons took their arms and marched to the frontier. But no hostile acts were committed. The commander on board the fleet sent a flag to General Allen, with a letter to the governor of Vermont assenting on the part of General Haldimand, commander-in-chief of the British army in Canada, to the proposal for an exchange of prisoners, and offering a truce with Vermont till the cartel should be arranged.

This preliminary negotiation of a truce was conducted by General Allen. In defining the extent of territory, which the truce should cover, he included all the settlements as far west as the Hudson River. To this extension, the British officer objected, as not being within the bounds of Vermont. Such an arrangement would moreover prevent the expedition up the Lake from acquiring honor, or attaining any ostensible object; whereas, if not hampered with the truce, it might act with some effect on the frontiers of New York. This was a strong motive for insisting, that the truce should be confined strictly within the limits of Vermont, but as General Allen was unyielding, the officer gave way, and it was definitively settled as reaching to Hudson's River. This was a dictate of sound policy, as appeared in the

subsequent history of Vermont. It had a conciliatory effect upon the inhabitants of that part of New York included in the truce. Their antipathy was disarmed, and at one time they even courted a union with Vermont.

As this was a secret arrangement, and not then made known publicly, the people were surprised to see the fleet retreating down the Lake, and the military disbanded and going home. Commissioners were appointed by the governor of Vermont to meet others from Canada, and settle the terms of a cartel. The season was so far advanced, however, that they were obstructed in their voyage across the Lake by the ice, and obliged to return. Nothing was done during the winter. The advantage thus far gained by Vermont was, that a campaign of the enemy on her borders had been rendered ineffectual. As a compensation, the British supposed they had made good progress in detaching from Congress the affections of a discontented province, and winning them over to the King.

As these transactions were well known to the enemy in New York, Colonel Robinson was concerned not to have received an answer to his letter. Thinking it might have miscarried, although he had sent a duplicate and triplicate, or assuming such a supposition as a pretence for writing again, he despatched a second letter to Ethan Allen, dated February 2d, 1781. In this was enclosed a fourth copy of the first, and it contained the following paragraph.

“The frequent accounts we have had for three months past, from your part of the country, confirms me in the opinion I had of your inclination to join the King’s cause, and assist in restoring America to her former peaceable and happy constitution. This induces me to make another trial in sending this to you, especially as I can now write with more authority, and assure you that you may obtain the terms mentioned in the above letter, provided you and the people of Vermont take an active part with us. I beg to have an answer to this as soon as possible, and that you will, if it is your intention, point out some method of carrying on a correspondence for the future ;

also in what manner you can be most serviceable to government, either by acting with the northern army, or to meet and join an army from hence. I should be glad if you would give me every information, that may be useful to the Commander-in-chief here."

Shortly after receiving this second epistle, General Allen sent them both to the Continental Congress, accompanied by one of his own, in which he expressed in very emphatical language his sentiments in regard to the interests of Vermont, and the unjustifiable attempts of the adjoining States to abridge her rights and even destroy her existence. Having explained the mode in which the letters came into his hands, and mentioned his having shown the first to Governor Chittenden and other gentlemen, he proceeds as follows :

"The result, after mature deliberation, and considering the extreme circumstances of the State, was, to take no further notice of the matter. The reasons for such a procedure are very obvious to the people of this State, when they consider that Congress have previously claimed an exclusive right of arbitrating on the existence of Vermont, as a separate government ; New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts Bay at the same time claiming this territory, either in whole or in part, and exerting their influence to make schisms among her citizens, thereby in a considerable degree weakening this government, and exposing its inhabitants to the incursion of the British troops, and their savage allies from the province of Quebec. It seems those governments, regardless of Vermont's contiguous situation to Canada, do not consider that their northern frontiers have been secured by her, nor the merit of this State in a long and hazardous war ; but have flattered themselves with the expectation, that this State could not fail (with their help) to be desolated by a foreign enemy, and that their exorbitant claims and avaricious designs may at some future period take place in this district of country.

"I am confident that Congress will not dispute my sincere attachment to the cause of my country, though I do not hesitate to say, I am fully grounded in opinion,

that Vermont has an indubitable right to agree on terms of a cessation of hostilities with Great Britain, provided the United States persist in rejecting her application for a union with them; for Vermont, of all people, would be the most miserable, were she obliged to defend the independence of the united claiming States, and they, at the same time, at full liberty to overturn and ruin the independence of Vermont. I am persuaded, when Congress consider the circumstances of this State, they will be the more surprised, that I have transmitted to them the enclosed letters, than that I have kept them in custody so long; for I am as resolutely determined to defend the independence of Vermont, as Congress are that of the United States; and rather than fail, I will retire with the hardy Green Mountain Boys into the desolate caverns of the mountains, and wage war with human nature at large."

The concluding words of this paragraph may be considered as characteristic of the writer; but the sentiments expressed in the letter, respecting the allegiance due from Vermont to the United States, were unquestionably entertained by all the principal men of that State. Independence was the first and determined purpose; and, while they were neglected by Congress, and, like another Poland, threatened with a triple partition between the adjoining States, they felt at liberty to pursue any course, that would secure their safety, and conduct them towards their ultimate object. It was on this principle, that they encouraged advances to be made by the British, and not that they ever had the remotest intention of deserting the cause of their country, or submitting in any manner to the jurisdiction of the English government.

While the war continued, however, these negotiations with the enemy were carried on with much address, and so successfully as to prevent any further hostilities from Canada. A correspondence was kept up, which was known only to a few persons, and was chiefly managed by Ethan Allen and his brother Ira Allen. Messengers came to them secretly with letters, and waited in con-

cealment till consultations were held, and answers prepared, with which they returned to Canada. This was a slow process, but it served to amuse the enemy, and keep their hopes alive. While this could be done, Vermont was safe from attack, and had only to apprehend the artifices of those, who were striving by the weapons of the civil power to annihilate her freedom.

The English ministry had at one time sanguine expectations from the prospect of affairs in this quarter. I have seen two letters from Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, one written in February and the other in June, 1781, wherein the minister congratulates the commander-in-chief on the happy return of the people of Vermont to their allegiance, and represents it as an important event. He adds, that, should Washington and the French meditate an irruption into Canada, they would find in Vermont an insurmountable barrier to their attempts; and also that General Haldimand would undoubtedly send a body of troops to act in conjunction with the people, secure the avenues through the country, and, when the season should admit, take possession of the upper parts of the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers, and cut off the communication between Albany and the Mohawk country. Again he observes, that, should the people of Vermont be menaced by a detachment from Washington's army, General Haldimand would have forces ready to throw in among them, by which they would be relieved from any fears of the resentment of Congress, and see it to be their wisest and safest course to return to their loyalty.

Such were the vagaries of Lord George Germain in his office at Whitehall, even within a few months of the capitulation at Yorktown. And in truth they present a very just specimen of the strange reveries, surprising ignorance, or wilful blindness of that minister, in regard to American affairs, during the whole war.

General Allen was not entirely occupied with the duties of his military station. At the next election after his return from captivity, he was chosen a representative to the Assembly of his state. How long he continued in

public life as a legislator, or how long he retained the active command of the militia, I have not been able to ascertain. When peace was restored, however, he seems to have resumed his agricultural habits, and devoted himself to his private affairs. He was a practical farmer, accustomed to labor with his own hands, and submit to the privations and hardships, which necessarily attend the condition of pioneers in a new country.

In this retirement he published a work on a series of topics very different from those, which had heretofore employed his pen.* He says in the preface, that he had been from his youth addicted to contemplation, and had from time to time committed his thoughts to paper. This book purports to be the result of his lucubrations, revised, arranged, and prepared with much labor for the press. In its literary execution it is much superior to any of his other writings, and was evidently elaborated with great patience of thought and care in the composition. It is, nevertheless, a crude and worthless performance, in which truth and error, reason and sophistry, knowledge and ignorance, ingenuity and presumption, are mingled together in a chaos, which the author denominates a system. Some of the chapters on natural religion, the being and attributes of God, and the principles and obligations of morality, should, perhaps, be excepted from this sweeping remark; for, although they contain little that is new, yet they are written in a tone, and express sentiments, which may screen them from so heavy a censure.

Founding religion on the attributes of the Deity and the nature of things, as interpreted by reason, the author takes it for granted, that there is no necessity for a revelation, and thence infers, that the Christian Revelation and miracles are false; and he argues against the Old Testament upon the same principles. Historical facts and internal evidence, the only basis of correct reasoning on this subject, are passed over in silence. There

* The book is entitled, '*Reason the only Oracle of Man, or a Compendious System of Natural Religion.*' It was published at Bennington, in the year 1784. The preface is dated July 2d, 1782

is no proof that the author ever examined them. It must be allowed, however, that he mistook some of the errors of Christian sects for the true doctrines of revealed religion, and that his views, as to the reality and nature of the system itself, were perverted by this misapprehension.

If we may judge, also, from various passages in this book, some of his biographers have not done him strict justice in regard to his religious opinions. They have affirmed, that he believed in the metempsychosis of the ancients, or the transmigration of souls after death into beasts, or fishes, and that "he often informed his friends, that he himself expected to live again in the form of a large white horse." If he was absurd and frivolous enough to say such a thing in conversation, he has certainly expressed very different sentiments in his writings. No person could declare more explicitly his belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, and a just retribution, than he has done in the following passages contained in this book.

"We should so far divest ourselves," he observes, "of the encumbrances of this world, which are too apt to engross our attention, as to acquire a consistent system of the knowledge of our duty, and make it our constant endeavor in life to act conformably to it. The knowledge of the being, perfections, creation, and providence of God, and the immortality of our souls, is the foundation of our religion." Again, "As true as mankind now exist and are endowed with reason and understanding, and have the power of agency and proficiency in moral good and evil, so true it is, that they must be ultimately rewarded or punished according to their respective merits or demerits; and it is as true as this world exists, and rational and accountable beings inhabit it, that the distribution of justice therein is partial, unequal and uncertain; and it is consequently as true as that there is a God, that there must be a future state of existence, in which the disorder, injustice, oppression and viciousness, which are acted and transacted by mankind in this life, shall be righteously adjusted, and the delinquents suitably punished."

To what extent these doctrines bear out the charge of a belief in the transmigration of souls, let the reader judge.

After the publication of the above work, I have not found recorded any events in the life of Ethan Allen, which are sufficiently important to be commemorated; unless it be the circumstance of his having been solicited, by Shays and his associates, to take command of the insurgents in Massachusetts. He rejected the proposal with disdain, sending back the messengers who brought it, with a reprimand for their presumption, and at the same time writing a letter to the governor of Massachusetts, in which he expressed his abhorrence of the insurrection, and assured the governor that his influence should be used to prevent any of its agents and abettors from receiving countenance or taking refuge in Vermont. This was conformable to all his previous conduct; for, notwithstanding the scenes of turbulence in which he was often engaged, it should be remembered to his honor, that he was ever, in theory and practice, a firm supporter of civil government when founded in equity and the rights of the people. So rigid was he in his patriotism, that, when it was discovered that one of his brothers had avowed Tory principles, and been guilty of a correspondence with the enemy, he entered a public complaint against him in his own name, and petitioned the court to confiscate his property in obedience to the laws of the State.

Before the end of the war, General Allen removed from Bennington, which had long been his place of residence. He was next for a short time an inhabitant of Arlington, afterwards of Sunderland, and finally he settled himself in the vicinity of Onion River, where he and his brothers had purchased large tracts of land. He was twice married. His second wife, and children by both marriages, survived him. Through life he possessed a robust constitution, and uncommonly good health; but his career was suddenly terminated by an apoplexy, at Burlington, in the year 1789.

We have thus sketched the principal incidents in the life of a man, who holds a place of some notoriety in the

history of his times. His character was strongly marked, both by its excellences and defects ; but it may safely be said, that the latter were attributable more to circumstances beyond his control, than to any original obliquity of his mind or heart. The want of early education, and the habits acquired by his pursuits in a rude and uncultivated state of society, were obstacles to his attainment of some of the higher and better qualities, which were not to be overcome. A roughness of manners and coarseness of language, a presumptuous way of reasoning upon all subjects, and his religious skepticism, may be traced to these sources. Faults of this stamp, and others akin to them, admit of no defence, though, when viewed in connexion with their causes, they may have claims to a charitable judgement. Had his understanding been weak, his temperament less ardent, his disposition less inquisitive, and his desire of honorable distinction less eager, the world would probably never have heard of his faults ; the shield of insignificance would have covered them ; but it was his destiny to be conspicuous, without the art to conceal or culture to soften his foibles.

Yet there is much to admire, in the character of Ethan Allen. He was brave, generous, and frank, true to his friends, true to his country, consistent and unyielding in his purposes, seeking at all times to promote the best interests of mankind, a lover of social harmony, and a determined foe to the artifices of injustice and the encroachments of power. Few have suffered more in the cause of freedom, few have borne their sufferings with a firmer constancy or a loftier spirit. His courage, even when apparently approaching to rashness, was calm and deliberate. No man probably ever possessed this attribute in a more remarkable degree. He was eccentric and ambitious, but these weaknesses, if such they were, never betrayed him into acts dishonorable, unworthy, or selfish. His enemies never had cause to question his magnanimity, nor his friends to regret confidence misplaced or expectations disappointed. He was kind and benevolent, humane and placable. In short, whatever may have been his peculiarities, or however these may have dimin-

ished the weight of his influence and the value of his public services, it must be allowed, that he was a man of very considerable importance in the sphere of his activity, and that to no individual among her patriot founders is the State of Vermont more indebted for the basis of her free institutions, and the achievement of her independence, than to **ETHAN ALLEN.**

LIFE
OF
SEBASTIAN CABOT;
BY
CHARLES HAYWARD, JR.

II.

8

V.



P R E F A C E .

IT has been necessary to gather materials for the following sketch chiefly from old and imperfect histories. So many interesting personal and public records of Sebastian Cabot have perished, that it is difficult to write a connected narrative of the events of his life, or to exhibit, in their proper light, the strong and remarkable traits of his character. It is somewhat discouraging, also, to find so few private anecdotes, and so little account of his domestic habits, which, after all, bring the man most vividly before us. Of his youth we know absolutely nothing; and it is necessary to delineate his character, without a knowledge of the minute influences under which it was formed. These obstacles, however, great as they are, should not prevent us from doing what justice we can to a man, who holds so high a place in the early history of America, and whose unobtrusive greatness has been studiously overlooked; and it is believed enough has been collected to interest the reader in his fortune, and to lead him to respect his character, honor his fame, and appreciate his hitherto neglected exertions.

I feel bound, distinctly and gratefully, to acknowledge my obligations to a volume, entitled "A Memoir of Sebastian Cabot;" a work of uncommon ability and learning, and of indefatigable research, without which the numerous and extraordinary errors of the old authors would probably have been perpetuated. This work, first published in London in the year 1831, was written by Mr. Richard Biddle, of Pennsylvania.

SEBASTIAN CABOT.

CHAPTER I.

Cabot's Birth and Youth.—Henry the Seventh grants a Patent for the Discovery of a Northwest Passage.—Discovery of the American Continent.—Cabot penetrates Hudson's Bay.—Failure of Provisions and Objections of his Crew.—Returns to England.—Second Patent.—Death of John Cabot.—Second Voyage to America.—Attempts to colonize Labrador.—Fails to discover a Northwest Passage.—Dissatisfaction of Colonists.—His return to England.—Injustice of Henry the Seventh.—Cabot quits his Service.

It has been the lot of the individual, whose adventures form the subject of the following narrative, to receive little gratitude for important services. Many know little more of him, than that he was a voyager of olden times. Of his peculiar firmness, enterprise, and perseverance, while multitudes have heralded the praises of less worthy men, very few have chosen to speak. England herself was not profuse of her favors to him while living, nor until lately has she seemed disposed to render justice to his memory. The inquirer is surprised to see how scanty are the written testimonials to his official excellence and private modesty and worth.

SEBASTIAN CABOT was born at Bristol, in England, about the year 1477,* and was the son of John Cabot, the eminent Venetian navigator. From his father's occasional residence abroad, has probably arisen the idea that

* Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals*, Vol. I. p. 404.

Sebastian Cabot was an Italian ; an error which has crept into several biographical compilations, but which his own testimony explicitly refutes. " Sebastian Cabote told me," says Richard Eden, " that he was borne in Bristowe, and that at four yeare ould he was carried with his father to Venice, and so returned agayne into England with his father, after certain years, whereby he was thought to have been borne in Venice."* Of Cabot's early years, a meagre account has been transmitted. After his removal to Venice, at four years of age, he probably received from his father, who is described as a man of considerable ability in mathematics and other sciences, a thorough and judicious education ; and, besides being instructed with his two brothers in arithmetic, geography, and cosmography, he acquired, while young, much skill in practical navigation.

We do not exactly know the year of his return to England. It was, however, while he was yet a boy ; for we find him there entering with youthful enthusiasm into the theories and golden speculations, which the discoveries of Columbus excited throughout Europe. He was just arrived at manhood, when that intrepid navigator imparted new life to the old world by his voyages to the western hemisphere. All Europe was awakened, and the family of the Cabots was among the warmest in insisting on further maritime adventure. There was a romance in the idea of discovering unknown realms ; the world was to be enlarged ; every kingdom of nature was to be more productive. Fancy wove around the success of Columbus numerous attractions for the inexperienced and adventurous, and an enthusiasm, of which we can hardly conceive, pervaded all classes. Cabot, after alluding to the feelings of his countrymen, adds, " By this fame and report, there increased in my heart a great flame of desire to attempt some notable thing." No wonder that the future adventurer, ambitious, intelligent, scarcely arrived at manhood, and educated by an experienced navigator, should be enthusiastic in the cause. Before long, the young seaman saw his wishes gratified.

* *Decades of the New World*, p. 255. Ed. of 1555.

King Henry the Seventh, having failed to secure the services of Columbus, granted a patent, under date of March 5th, 1496, to John Cabot and his three sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sancius, authorizing them, their heirs or deputies, "to sail to all parts, countries, and seas of the East, of the West, and of the North, under our banners and ensigns, with five ships, of what burden or quantity soever they may be, and as many mariners or men as they will have with them in the said ships, upon their own proper costs and charges, to seek out, discover, and find whatsoever isles, countries, regions, or provinces of the heathen and infidels, whatsoever they may be, and in what part of the world soever they be, which before this time have been unknown to all Christians."* In accordance with this patent, immediate preparations were made to discover the Northwest passage to India; the first important enterprise in which Sebastian took part.

It has been a much controverted question, whether John Cabot was not himself the principal in, and consequently entitled to the credit of, this expedition. For many years it was supposed that he was; although some writers warmly contended, and one has lately proved,† that the voyage was chiefly forwarded by his son Sebastian. The problem is not a difficult one. Henry the Seventh was notoriously thrifty; he had granted a liberal patent, and he naturally secured his stipulated share, namely, one fifth of the profits, by imposing liabilities on the wealthy Venetian merchant. Sebastian was little more than seventeen years of age, and the King chose that the patent should be dignified by the name of an elder man. Moreover the father "followed the trade of marchandises," and would gladly facilitate by a short cut, as was their expectation, the commerce of the East.

The resources of John Cabot, the royal donations, and the pride and ambition of all parties, assisted the

* Hakluyt's *Voyages and Discoveries*, Vol. III. p. 6.

† Memoir of Sebastian Cabot, p. 49.

project, until, in the spring of 1497, every obstacle having been removed, the expedition sailed from Bristol under the guidance of its youthful commander. The father accompanied his son, but only, it is probable, to give occasional advice, and to superintend the mercantile proceedings. Even at the early date of this voyage, a trade was established between Iceland and Bristol; not only, therefore, for the sake of trade, but to recruit the spirit of the crews, which an untried and hazardous voyage might otherwise depress, they laid their course toward Iceland. Minute accounts of this enterprise are not in existence; but sufficient remains to show the firmness and intelligence, which marked then and afterwards the character of Cabot.

After a considerable delay at Iceland, the party, partaking in some degree of their young leader's enthusiasm, began their voyage through the western seas. "They sailed happily," we are told, "confident of finding the long-desired Northwest passage to India, till the 24th of June, 1497," when an unexpected wonder was revealed.* About five o'clock in the morning, the observers from the leading ships were surprised at the discovery of land, which, on a nearer approach, was found considerably extended. Cabot's simple account of this momentous discovery is amusing. He hoped to make his way immediately to India, "but, after certayne dayes," said he, "I found that the land ranne towards the north, which was to mee a great displeasure." However great a displeasure to the young navigator, he had discovered the American continent. The land seen was the coast, together with an island off the coast, of Labrador; the latter received the name of St. John's Island, from the day on which it was discovered, and is described as "full of white bears, and stagges far greater than the English."† Columbus had discovered and taken possession of islands in the New World, but it was reserved for Cabot to obtain the first sight of the continent. We here perceive the straight-forward ener-

* Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 6.

† Lives of the Admirals, Vol. I. p. 338.

gy of the young navigator; he did not forget, as many would have done, the object of his voyage. Although his men were attracted by the unexpected continent, he remembered his obligation to open the India passage, and, there is reason to think, penetrated farther north than to the sixty-seventh degree, in the accomplishment, as he hoped, of his design.

The bay, since called Hudson's Bay, appeared to Cabot to be the passage he was seeking. With something like triumph he left his course on the ocean; the extensive sheet of water before him confirmed his opinion, and for several days he went forward confident of success. As he was urging on with no less enthusiasm than when he left Bristol, discontent was manifested on the part of his crew. He reasoned with them, encouraged, and commanded; but they wanted his youthful confidence; their voyage had been long and dangerous; their provisions were nearly exhausted; they were going they knew not whither; and they insisted on returning to England. He had sufficient self-command and policy not to contend with these repining mariners; he mildly promised to comply with their demands. Retracing his steps with philosophical coolness, and relinquishing his project, he soon regained the Atlantic. After coasting to the southward, he left the continent he had discovered, and returned to his native country.

If Sebastian Cabot had been a vain man, he might have boasted, on his return, of what he had succeeded in accomplishing. Such, however, does not seem to have been his character, and we find him making immediate exertions for a second expedition. His arguments in favor of the first voyage had been laughed at; he was accused of being visionary; when age should teach him wisdom, the cautious said, he would be content to stay at home. His fortunes now wore a different aspect; in his search for the India passage, he had set eyes on the New World; his plans, after all, were not quite so visionary, and the most incredulous allowed that one so enterprising and fortunate should make another attempt.

A second patent, bearing date February 3d, 1498, was

granted by Henry the Seventh. It stood in the name of John Cabot and his deputies, Sebastian being still a young man, and it allowed them "six English shippes, so that and if the said shippes be of the bourdeyn of two hundred tonnes or under, with their apparail requisite and necessarie for the safe conduct of the said shippes."* They were further instructed to pursue their original discoveries. These second letters show less of the thrifty spirit which Henry before displayed. The result of the former voyage had warmed the King into something like liberality.

Shortly after the date of this patent, John Cabot died, and Sebastian determined to prosecute alone the voyage, of which he had ever, in reality, the direction. Aside from his adventurous spirit, the heavy expenses of the first voyage had been requited only by his claims in the new country. Neither was he ready to relinquish what he had so hardly won, now that public favor was on his side. What the royal interest was in this second expedition, it is impossible to state; it extended, however, to one or two ships, and a considerable amount of funds. "Divers merchants of London also adventured small stocks," induced, as mankind are in every age and country, by the novelty of the project. Trusting that the India passage would still be ascertained, or that the new country might be a profitable market, mercantile adventurers exerted themselves to freight several small vessels, which, as part of Cabot's fleet, sailed from Bristol in 1498.

But for the grossest neglect, we might have learned the particulars of these memorable voyages from Cabot himself. A series of his papers, with suitable maps, descriptive of these adventures, was left nearly ready for publication. Carelessness, however, suffered them to be mislaid, and now time has hidden them for ever. How delightful as well as remarkable was the modesty,

* This interesting document has lately been discovered by the indefatigable author of the "Memoir of Sebastian Cabot," by whom it was first given to the world.

which made no boast of such achievements ; committing merit to the keeping of a few hasty manuscripts, and the gratitude of posterity ; that gratitude, which has suffered such a man to be forgotten, because he forbore to proclaim his own praises.

The particulars of Cabot's second expedition to the American continent are very scanty. His patience and daring do not seem to have met with success. Besides searching for the desirable route to the East, his object was doubtless to colonize the new region, for which purpose he took with him three hundred men. Before long, he once more saw with delight the shores of the New World. With characteristic promptitude he effected a landing on the coast of Labrador, and instructed a portion of his men to examine the country, with a view to colonization, while he sailed farther to seek the passage. His course is uncertain, and not very important, since his intentions were defeated.

During Cabot's absence, his crew upon the land suffered, it is supposed, with extreme cold, although in the middle of July. "The dayes were very longe, and in manner without nyght." The territory was a wilderness, and provisions were unattainable ; in a word, they missed their usual English comforts, and gave way to despondency. Several excursions for exploring the country were attempted ; but the resolution, which the conduct and commands of their young leader had inspired, was gone, and they were naturally enough dispirited by the loss of companions and friends, who daily perished under the severity of the climate. Cabot, not finding what he sought, returned to Labrador ; but how was the vexation of his other disappointments increased on learning the condition of his colonists ! Not only had they taken no steps toward a settlement, but absolutely refused to remain longer on the coast. They complained of exposure to a cold climate, and, with a disregard to previous engagements and all manly discipline, insisted on being removed.

Cabot yielded to the demands of his crew, and having laid his course to the south as far as Cape Florida, he

recrossed the Atlantic. His reception in England was calculated to hurt his pride, and it accounts for the blank at this period in his public life. Let us see how his nation repaid the discoverer of the American continent.*

Henry the Seventh was one of the most penurious monarchs ever seated on the throne of England; avarice was with him almost a disease, and so far from excelling, he fell far short of many of his subjects in liberality. Such was the king, who, it will be remembered, was considerably interested in Cabot's pecuniary success. When the navigator returned without having opened the new way to the luxuries of India, or having colonized the lately discovered territory, disappointment was manifested both by the King and private individuals. And, as the Cornish rebellion was demanding the royal attention, and the novelty of the voyages had worn away, Cabot met with coldness and neglect. The King's method of revenging a miscarriage, which no one could have prevented, convinces us that his disease, as has been said, "had now reached his moral sense."

The second letters patent empowered *John Cabot and his deputies*, with no mention of heirs; so that in strictness the privilege expired at his death, and Sebastian, in acting under this grant, might possibly have violated his powers. Of this quibble, the magnanimous monarch availed himself to rescind the privilege of the first patent, in which his name actually appeared.

Cabot felt deeply the royal injustice, and although his means were limited, he had no idea of depending on a disappointed and mean-spirited sovereign. If Henry, like Ferdinand of Spain in his treatment of

* I am aware, that at so late a day it seems presumptuous to deny that Columbus was the discoverer of America; certainly, presumptuous, despite the theories concerning the Northmen and others, to assert that Cabot first discovered it. That he is entitled to priority of claim to Columbus, in discovering the *continent*, will appear from a comparison of dates. Cabot's discovery was made June 24th, 1497. Columbus discovered the continent on his third voyage, which commenced May 30th, 1498; and Amerigo Vespucci did not leave Spain until May 20th, 1499. Cabot was, therefore, nearly one year in advance of Columbus, and nearly two in advance of Amerigo Vespucci.

Columbus, could slight a man to whom the world was indebted, the poor mariner could rid himself of a monarch whose patronage was limited by hope of pecuniary compensation. In the year 1499, he again asked royal assistance; but, meeting with "noe greate or favourable entertainment," he furnished out of his own means the suitable vessels, and, setting forth from Bristol, "made great discoveries."

For fifteen years he scarcely returned to England; at least, he took no part in any of her naval expeditions. We hear of him at one period at Maracaibo. That his spirit of adventure could be suddenly checked, is not probable; and, perhaps, besides extending his reputation abroad, he was perfecting his naval education. Columbus had now made his second and third voyages, and had thereby gained the fame of having discovered America. Other adventurers, too, who but followed the steps of predecessors, were honored as public benefactors, while not one "bay, cape, or headland" in the new country recalled by its name the memory of Cabot. With these reflections were nearly fifteen years of his life embittered. He no more proffered his services to a monarch who had slighted them, and in the year 1512, we find him in the employ of the Spanish government.

CHAPTER II.

Henry the Eighth.—Ferdinand of Spain invites Cabot to his Service.—Cabot stationed at Seville.—Council of the Indies.—Death of Ferdinand.—Cabot returns to England.—Expedition of 1517.—Sir Thomas Pert the Cause of its Failure.—Cabot recalled to Spain by Charles the Fifth.—Appointed Pilot-Major of Spain.—Expedition to the Moluccas.—Council of Badajos.—Jealousy of the Portuguese.—Diego Garcia.—Martin Mendez.—The Brothers Rojas.

THE loss of the documents before alluded to, cannot be too much lamented. Without them, it must be confessed, the fifteen years previous to Cabot's appearance in Spain are poorly accounted for. A blank occurs, which these annals, written when his spirits were buoyant, and his mind active, would doubtless fill up.*

King Henry the Seventh died in the year 1509, during Cabot's absence; and upon the accession of his son it became probable that the covetousness of the father would be in some measure atoned for, and that Cabot would be reinstated in the naval service. Henry the Eighth, only eighteen years of age when he ascended the throne, had an "active and fiery spirit," which had been hitherto directed toward the attainment of a superior education. His opinion of his own talents, and his ambition, were considerable, and he made free with the hoarded treasure of his father in encouraging projects of public utility. Such a monarch, particularly as the events of

* That such papers were once accessible, may be inferred from the following passage in Hakluyt, which stands as the heading to Cabot's description of St. John's island. "An extract taken out of the map of Sebastian Cabot, cut by Clement Adams, concerning his discovery of the West Indies, which is to be seene in her Majesty's privie gallerie at Westminster, and in many other ancient merchants' houses."

the last ten years had raised Cabot's original discoveries in the general estimation, was likely to retrieve the errors of his predecessor.

In this state of affairs, Ferdinand of Spain determined to anticipate the movements of Henry, by attaching Cabot to his service. Amerigo Vespucci having lately died, an opening in the naval department seemed to offer itself. Accordingly, while Henry was engaged in continental discussions, Ferdinand addressed a letter to Lord Willoughby, Captain-general of England, requesting him to forward his designs by sending Cabot to Spain; a direction which was complied with on the 13th of September, 1512. The king of Spain, with a very sudden desire to be considered a patron of science, made great exertions to extend maritime discoveries. On Cabot's arrival in his kingdom, he gave him the title of his Captain, and stationed him at Seville with a liberal allowance, and at first, as it would appear, with no definite duties. Ferdinand seems to have wished to atone for his treatment in England, and to have been aware that no one could afford more valuable information concerning the Northwest passage, and the coast of Labrador.

In 1515, Cabot was employed, with several of the best cosmographers of the age, on Ferdinand's favorite project, a general revision of maps and charts. During the same year he was honored by being chosen a member of the Council of the Indies, a fact which, considering his age and nativity, shows him to have been in high favor at court. These duties were probably well performed, since, when Ferdinand set on foot an expedition to sail the following year in search of the India passage, he complimented Cabot so highly as to give him the command. This advancement is doubtless as much attributable to Ferdinand's rivalry with Henry, as to the talents of the navigator. An ambitious king easily overlooks the faults of a favorite. We come now to one of the sudden changes, which it was Sebastian Cabot's fortune often to experience.

The new expedition was in considerable forwardness, when, unluckily for him, Ferdinand died on the 23d of

January, 1516. All preparations were checked, public well-wishers and ambitious speculators were disappointed; but Cabot had more cause than any other to regret the loss of his patron. Charles the Fifth, who was to be the successor, had lately been acknowledged Emperor in the Netherlands, and remained some time in Brussels before assuming the Spanish crown; a period of dissension and much confusion among the Spaniards, who, by means of his minister Chièvres, employed every intriguing art to find favor with the young sovereign.

Ferdinand's kindness to Cabot had incensed his jealous subjects; they were indignant, that the King should have raised a foreigner to his confidence, and availed themselves of his death to manifest their resentment. They insinuated that the voyage of 1496 had accomplished nothing, that Cabot was a foreign impostor, and that under their new king affairs should take a different turn. Cardinal Ximenes was too aged to govern with severity during the interregnum, and when Charles arrived in Spain, at only sixteen years of age, intriguers and misrepresenters had given an undue bias to his mind. Even Fonseca, the notorious calumniator of Columbus, was in office.

Cabot could catch no glimmer of hope in all this darkness; and, that he might avoid undeserved obloquy, he returned once more to England. We may remark here his determination, constantly adhered to, of being independent of royalty. If he perceived that he was not needed, he left his king's employment; otherwise, he considered his services an equivalent for the favors received. His strong common sense, which generally exceeded his intellectual powers, prevented his considering a well-founded enterprise desperate because of a few untoward accidents; and he relied on his own honest intentions in withstanding envy or malice.

After a short residence in England, our navigator succeeded in fitting out the expedition which the death of Ferdinand had delayed. Henry the Eighth, probably not displeased at his return, "furnished certen shippes" and some funds, and appointed one Sir Thomas Pert first in command under Cabot, whose weakness, as we

shall see, rendered the affair a failure. They sailed from England in 1517. Concerning their exact destination many disputes have arisen. Several historians say, that they went on a trading voyage to the Spanish settlements in the West Indies; but these accounts are so confused, that we find them at one time off the coast of Labrador, and shortly after as far south as Cape Florida. The point is interesting, because, if Cabot really undertook a trading voyage, he must have relinquished, in a moment of pique, his hopes of discovering the Northwest passage. But the fact is otherwise. The trading voyage, which, by a confusion of dates, is assigned to 1517, actually took place ten years after, in 1527. So that Cabot was neither so inconsistent, nor so ungrateful to the memory of his late patron, as to interfere with a trade to which the Spanish government laid an exclusive claim.

Contemporary and subsequent accounts represent Sir Thomas Pert as totally unfit to be second in command in such an expedition. His cowardice was sufficient to render his commander's energy ineffectual. They penetrated to about the sixty-seventh degree of north latitude, and, entering Hudson's Bay, gave English names to various places in the vicinity, when, as previously, doubts of success arose among the crew. The severity of the climate, and many privations, increased their eagerness to return; while Pert, a man of high command and influence, favored their remonstrances. Under such circumstances, it was impossible to quell the mutiny by force; and, the pilots being unable to convince the understandings of the crew, Cabot turned homeward. Although he had confessedly failed, he must have gained credit in England by his resolution, while Sir Thomas seems to have been recognised as the cause of the mis-carriage. "His faint heart," says Eden, "was the cause that the voyage took none effect."*

* It has been a question whether this was not the first entrance into Hudson's Bay, and whether the latitude of sixty-seven was reached in 1497. As these questions have little interest for the general reader, I omit any further discussion of them. They are treated at length in the 'Memoir of Cabot,' Chapter xiv.

Neither the merchants interested in the late unfortunate expedition, nor the King, who was now engaged on the continent, were disposed to renew an attempt to discover the long-desired passage. Moreover, a frightful disease,* known as the *Sweating Sickness*, prevailed in England in 1517, and prevented the nation from thinking of an expensive and unpromising enterprise. Fortunately for Cabot, the affairs of Spain were in a better condition. Soon after his accession, Charles the Fifth, examining into the unsettled expedition of 1516, was surprised at the sudden disappearance of Cabot. He already knew something of his character, and the state records bore ample testimony of Ferdinand's high regard for him. These facts sufficiently exposed the jealousy and intrigues of the Spaniards; and Charles, anxious to atone for past injustice, appointed Cabot, in 1518, to the honorable office of Pilot-Major of Spain.† This favor was confirmed when the Emperor visited England, in 1520.

Cabot's duties now became numerous and highly responsible. Public opinion inclined to a Southern expedition. "What need have we," said Peter Martyr, the historian, "of these things, which are common with all the people of Europe? To the South! to the South! They that seek for riches must not go to the cold and frozen North."

Attention was gradually directed to the Moluccas, and the other islands in the same latitude; and Cabot advised a voyage thither through the Straits of Magellan, then recently discovered. But, before the project was matured, he was brought conspicuously before the public. Portugal, having hitherto by the old route engrossed the trade of the Moluccas, remonstrated strongly against these movements in Spain, and contended, that, by the grants of the papal bull, the said islands fell within her limits. Spain laid an opposing claim; and, in order to a settlement, the Emperor ordained, that a solemn council should be held at Badajos in the year 1524. At the head of a list of

* Memoir of Cabot, p. 120.

† Herrera, Dec. II. lib. iii. cap. 7.

ons summoned for consultation, and of course of the best repute in the nautical profession, is the name of Cabot. After more than a month's session, the council agreed, on the 31st of May, that the islands fell, by at least twenty degrees, within the Spanish limits. The Portuguese representatives retired, much chagrined, and redoubled their threats of maintaining their pretensions by force. We shall hereafter see how they vented their dissatisfaction.

The important decision being made known, a Company was formed for the prosecution of the Molucca trade, which, having received permission from the Council of the Indies, Cabot accepted the command. He gave orders for the faithful performance of his duty, and by articles of agreement, executed at Madrid in 1525, three ships and one hundred and fifty men were to be provided by the Emperor, and the Company were to supply the funds for commercial purposes. Four thousand ducats, and a share of the profits, were guaranteed to the Emperor. In this enterprise Cabot received the title of Captain-general, and the month of August, 1525, was fixed upon for their departure. Numerous circumstances, however, were combined to cause delay.

When the Portuguese found their threats had no effect on Charles the Fifth, they resorted to more importunate remonstrances. Their young king insisted, that an invasion of his monopoly would be the ruin of his kingdom, from which the consanguinity of the parties, as well as their connexion by marriage, (he having obtained the hand of the Emperor's sister,) should secure him. To this, Charles replied, that, however much he might regard domestic ties, he could not reasonably be expected to relinquish an enterprise, the right to which lay entirely on his side. Incensed by his refusal, the king of Portugal took secret measures to thwart his rival's hopes; employing, as the sequel renders probable, a worthless man, named Diego Garcia. This person, who could probably be induced by pay to any villany, prepared with great secrecy a squadron of three vessels, solely, we must believe, to embar-

rass Cabot's movements. We shall meet him at a more advanced stage of the enterprise.

Meantime, many delays occurred at home to try the patience of our navigator. One set of men harassed him, exceedingly, by superintending, in the capacity of agents, the naval arrangements. In almost every point, they were at variance. He wished to appoint his own lieutenant-general, and nominated one De Rufis, a trust-worthy friend, to that office. The deputies pretended to be provoked at his obstinacy, and committed the trust to one Martin Mendez, late an officer under Magellan. Whether Cabot was unjustly prejudiced against this man, which is quite possible, or not, it is evident that no unanimity could exist between such officers; nor would Cabot consent to the appointment, until a written promise had been given, that Mendez should act only under his directions or in his absence. Instead of looking, therefore, for counsel and friendship in the lieutenant, the captain could only hope that he would not openly oppose his orders.

Two brothers, of Spanish extraction, named Miguel de Rojas, and Francisco de Rojas, who afterwards made themselves conspicuous, were also attached to the expedition. The former was a man of considerable valor and nautical skill, the latter the commander of one of the ships, the *Trinidad*, and both of them zealous adherents of Martin Mendez.

Finally, to complete this dangerous outfit, the unprecedented step was taken of furnishing each ship with *sealed orders*, which were to be opened as soon as they were fairly embarked. These, which were probably given without Cabot's knowledge, contained the provision, that, in case of his death, the chief command should devolve on one of eleven persons therein nominated, and, in case of their death, on him chosen by the general vote, provided that, on an equality of votes, the candidates should cast lots. This was indeed a most ingenious "premium to disaffection," and, if these facts were known to him, Cabot was to blame for sailing at such odds. Perhaps, however, as he had haggled so long

with the captious deputies, he was unwilling to raise new **objections**.

Under these inauspicious circumstances the expedition sailed, at length, in the beginning of April, 1526. A temptation, as we have seen, was before every individual to strive after the supreme power. That its devolving on some of the inferiors was thought possible in Spain, the sealed orders plainly showed; and we cannot mark the commencement of such a voyage without more than one misgiving as to its success; without a fear lest the commander's energy may fail, in time of need, to calm those stormy elements of disaffection and treachery.

CHAPTER III.

Cabot sails to the Canaries, and thence to the Cape de Verds.—Disaffection of Mendez and the Rojas.—Mutiny.—Cabot enters the River La Plata.—Annoyed by the Natives.—Enters the Paraná and the Paraguay.—Three Spaniards seized, and a violent Contest ensues.—The Party harassed by Diego Garcia, who overtakes Cabot at Santa Aña, and claims the Right of Discovery.—Cabot resists.—Garcia leaves the Country.—Cabot sends a Messenger to Spain, and determines to conquer Peru.—The Emperor's pecuniary Embarrassments, when he receives the Report.—Cabot explores the La Plata.—Quarrel between the Followers of Cabot and Garcia.—Capture of Sanctus Spiritus.—The Adventurers return to Spain.

No one would have been surprised, had the smothered flame of mutiny, which every arrangement must have tended to cherish, broken out the very day of leaving the shore. That event was reserved for a later period. The testimony of personal friends, as well as his public life, gives us a high idea of Cabot's gentleness of character. His companions always speak of him with affection,

and few instances of his harshness or severity are recorded. Of firmness, in time of danger, we shall see he was not destitute. His ambition was indulged for the public good. Had he been more mindful of himself, he would have escaped many disappointments, and enjoyed more renown.

He first sailed to the Canaries,* and thence to the Cape de Verd Islands, touching at both, it is probable, to replenish the stock of provisions, and committing no such outrages as his enemies have represented. The Islanders were uniformly kind to him, and injury in return would have been unnecessary and impolitic. Cape St. Augustine was their next stopping-place, from which they laid their course to the south. But the voyage was not thus far accomplished without trouble; for the three secret traitors were much confirmed by the extraordinary arrangements of the deputies to provide for the Captain-general's losing the command.

Cunning men in power may always find causes of dissatisfaction; and Martin Mendez and the brothers Rojas soon began to complain, that Cabot did not strive to allay the disputes which had arisen at Seville. They tried to convince the sailors, that he had laid in no adequate store of provisions, or, at any rate, that he secreted them in his own vessel from general distribution. Mendez desired his partisans, if they were true men, to withstand oppression, and depose a tyrant in favor of honest officers. The plans of revolt were originated and matured by these reckless mariners in utter secrecy. At length the time came, which was agreed on for active resistance.

As the squadron was running down the coast of Brazil, these men became openly insolent in blaming the movements of their commander, exhorting the crews, who naturally partook of the excitement, to avail themselves promptly of the privileges of the sealed orders. Cabot's situation was a critical one; but two of his countrymen were in the expedition, and he heard all

* *Lives of the Admirals*, Vol. I. p. 409.

around him insinuations of foreign usurpation, and that he was raised by favor to govern a people whom he had never materially served. As his three highest officers were inimical, he saw that he must rely solely on himself. The band which rallied around Mendez, he was well aware, hoped to intimidate him by numbers, and were not prepared for decisive resistance; accordingly, without the scruples of a weaker man, and with no attempt at a compromise, he ordered Martin Mendez and Miguel and Francisco de Rojas to be seized, (taking the latter from his ship without ceremony,) and, placing them with two faithful seamen in an open boat, he put them on shore at the nearest island. This degrading treatment of men so lately glorying in their superiority was never forgotten; and years afterwards we find them employing their malice against their energetic commander.

The measure was entirely successful in quelling further mutiny. But as the Captain-general had lost his highest officers, he felt unauthorized, without special permission, to prosecute the original enterprise, and, as the best expedient, directed his course to the mouth of the La Plata. It is probable that he intended to make this river merely a temporary stopping-place. It proved, however, the scene of much wild adventure. In fact, we have now reached the most romantic period in Cabot's life. In addition to being deprived of his officers, he lost one of his vessels by shipwreck, which deterred him altogether from prosecuting the voyage. He resolved, with his usual activity of mind, to renew the attempt to explore the La Plata; in making which, his predecessor in the office of Pilot-Major, Diego de Solis, had perished. This course, under existing circumstances, was probably the best; certainly he was right in waiting further commands from the Emperor. The next five years did much to unfold his character, prove his skill, and mature his judgement. His predecessor, it must be remembered, with a body of fifty men, had been inhumanly butchered, and actually devoured, by the people among whom he was thrown.

Cabot sailed boldly up the river, from which modern

navigating skill has not yet removed the dangers, as far as the small island afterwards called St. Gabriel, just off the city of Buenos Ayres. Near this is the island called after Martin Garcia, pilot of the unfortunate Solis, and one of the few who escaped the voracity of the savages. He afterwards died and was buried in the place where Diego was destroyed.

But this melancholy spot was not necessary to remind our adventurer of the hostility of the natives; for their very first landing at St. Gabriel was stoutly resisted. His courage, however, prevailed; and, obtaining a suitable ground for anchoring his vessels, the captain with most of his crew proceeded to further discovery in boats. Seven leagues further up, he found the port which he named St. Salvador,* situated on an island just where the La Plata changes into the Paraná, and nearly opposite the mouth of the Uruguay. Here the inhabitants likewise annoyed the Spaniards by killing two of their number; declaring, however, that to make a meal of them was not their intention, since the party of Solis had given them sufficient opportunity to taste the flesh of soldiers.

St. Salvador proved an excellent harbor, and the ships were left there with a guard under Antonio de Grajeda. Meantime Cabot prepared several boats and a small caravel, and proceeded up the Paraná. Some miles higher up, he erected the fort still seen on the maps as Sanctus Spiritus, finding the inhabitants for the first time very intelligent, and, according to Herrera, "a good, rational people." Although our voyager's party, at first not numerous, was greatly diminished by defection and mortality, his hopes do not seem to have been weakened for a moment. He encouraged the avaricious by hopes of gain, and pointed out to the weary the wonderful novelties of the country through which they were passing. Besides, the natives were daily attracted from the shore, and in the simplicity of their admiration, flocked to the ships.

* Memoir of Cabot, p. 150.

After sailing through a land "very fayre and inhabited with infinite people," they reached the point where the river receives the Paraguay, itself branching off to the right. Leaving the Paraná, therefore, on the right, they ascended the new river about thirty-four leagues.* The inhabitants of this district differed from any before seen, being acquainted with agriculture, and carrying to a great extent their jealousy of foreign invasion, and particularly their hatred toward the Spanish and Portuguese. These qualities contrasted singularly with some other points in their character; they were industrious, regardful of each other's rights, and cultivated their land to advantage; while their continual enmity to strangers rendered our navigator's situation extremely critical. Notwithstanding his care to avert difficulty, his hitherto peaceful voyage was soon changed into fierce contention.

Three Spaniards having one day unwittingly left their party, to gather the fruit of the palm tree, the natives laid violent hands on them. Resistance was impossible, and the poor fellows were easily captured. Their comrades, on learning the news, determined to avenge the wrong; and Cabot, for the first time, became a military commander.

The small band of Spanish adventurers, worn by the labors of a long voyage, might well have declined a contest with the hordes of natives that now came against them. But their national spirit, together with the hardihood of their profession, made them alive to every injury. They were ignorant of the country, and unskilled in their enemy's mode of warfare; but yet, under Cabot's command, they sustained their part of a long and bloody contest with unflinching courage. It probably lasted most of the day, doubly severe for our adventurers, inasmuch as they had no strong-holds on the shore; yet, on its conclusion, three hundred natives and only twenty-five Spaniards were found to have fallen. The Captain-

* Campbell and others transpose the names of these rivers. Herrera, however, together with the author of the "Memoir of Cabot," who are more worthy to be trusted, furnish the above account.

general, we may suppose from this fact, showed a fair degree of military skill; he was enabled to retain his position in the river, and, after the battle, despatched a letter to the commander of one of the forts, giving the particulars of the affray, and the loss on each side.

Cabot could ill afford to lose these men, particularly as their fate depressed the hopes of the survivors, who had by no means agreed to undergo the hardships of a voyage up the La Plata. From this time, the prospects of the party, hitherto bright, became dark and ominous. Cabot doubtless might have withstood any further attacks during his voyage, had not Diego Garcia, a man whom we have met before, and who seems always to have been the evil genius of our navigator, interrupted his plans at this point. It is time to trace this man's movements after leaving Spain under the auspices of the Portuguese government.

The reasons for believing that the king of Portugal, disappointed by the decision of the council at Badajos, employed Garcia to follow Cabot's steps, and frustrate his projects, have already been stated. Let us see how faithfully the mission was performed. Garcia left Spain in 1526, made his way to the Canaries, next to the Cape de Verds, and thence to the coast of Brazil. During the early months of 1527, he visited the bay of All Saints, the island of Patos, and at length, probably balked of his intention of meeting Cabot at either of the above-mentioned places, he entered the mouth of the La Plata. His course, thus far, it will be seen, was exactly that of Cabot, and he ascended the river immediately.

Antonio de Grajeda, commander of the ships which Cabot left at St. Salvador, had just received the letter announcing the dreadful battle, when he perceived Garcia's party coming up the La Plata. Agitated by the late news, he fancied that they were no others than the mutineers, whom the captain had put on shore; accordingly Garcia was met with several armed boats, led by the commander in person. At first he favored the misconception, and they had nearly come to open contest; he declared himself, however, in time to secure a peace-

able issue. Parting with one of his vessels, which he had shamefully allowed to be employed in the slave business, he ordered the remainder to follow him immediately to the commodious harbor of St. Salvador. Perhaps he foresaw that Cabot would give him no favorable reception, and was willing to have forces at hand.

Garcia then manned two brigantines with sixty men, and ascended thence to the fort of Sanctus Spiritus, where Cabot had left a small force under Gregorio Caro. This commander was courteous and good-natured; and to Garcia's haughty demand of a surrender of the fort, he replied, that, although very ready to serve his guest, he should hold command in the name of Cabot and the Emperor. He seems, however, to have kept terms with the Portuguese. Indeed, we can hardly suppose that he was aware of Garcia's character and intentions; for he requested, as a favor, that he would liberate any of Cabot's party that might have fallen into the enemy's hands, pledging himself to reimburse whatever ransom money was expended; and finally besought him to befriend the Spaniards, should they in the late skirmish have lost their commander.

This is not the language he would have used towards Garcia, had he fully known him; and it was only likely to excite a smile in an unprincipled man, in the employ of a revengeful government. Indeed, when he reached the Paraguay, Diego was so mindful of Caro's request, that he made an excursion along the right branch of the Paraná. This movement is the only one which seems to contradict the supposition, that he intended from the first to overtake and embarrass our navigator. If such was his intention, a digression was both useless and prejudicial.

Garcia soon returned to his purpose, and led his party to Santa Aña, near which port the battle had taken place and Cabot was now stationed. His surprise at seeing Diego can best be imagined. No historian has left a particular account of their interview. Probably much displeasure manifested itself in his reception, and perhaps Garcia was pleased to perceive that his rival's

force, what with mortality and the detachments at the forts, was much weakened. The new-comer repeated his demands of a surrender ; insisting, upon grounds not very justifiable, on the sole right of discovery. Cabot was not a man to yield to such injustice ; neither was he inclined, in a savage and obscure region, to involve his men in a contest, which, whoever got the better, must necessarily produce great distress. The result of their altercations cannot be known. In a short time, they returned, not in much mutual cordiality, to Sanctus Spiritus. Garcia, having stationed at the forts a large body of his followers, who partook of his spirit, and from whom Cabot subsequently suffered inconvenience, left the country without delay.

Cabot's only course was to despatch messengers to Charles the Fifth, in order, by a candid account of his voyage, his treatment of the mutinous officers, and consequent change of destination, to counteract the calumnies which a disappointed rival might circulate in Spain. The persons so employed were Francis Calderon and George Barlow, and their original report is still in existence.* To understand fully the force of this document, it is necessary to bring before ourselves the hopes which Cabot's success in ascending the river, together with his ambitious temperament, naturally inspired.

At the commencement of the voyage, he was expected to touch at the western shore of America. "Having passed the winding strait of Magellan, he is to direct his course to the right hand, in the rear of our supposed continent." Accident had changed his course, and he now hoped, that, by continuing his ascent of the river, and by risking a few more contests with the savages, he should reach the intended coast by a route hitherto unknown. Besides, he observed that gold and silver ornaments were worn in profusion by several tribes along the La Plata, and, with his usual shrewdness, making friends of them, "he came to learn many secrets of the country." Having reached the waters which

* Herrera, Dec. IV. lib. iii. cap. 1.

would lead him to the mines, he had possibly fixed his hopes on the reduction of a region, the riches of which would secure a competency to his party, and repay the generosity of his sovereign. In other expeditions he had been baffled; this discovery seemed indisputably his own.

We have no accounts of Garcia's efforts, on arriving in Europe, further than what is to be gathered from the ill-natured sneers of several historians. He was not idle, and in some quarters doubtless brought Cabot into disrepute. Perhaps he was exciting the Portuguese government to a decisive step in opposition. Whatever were his endeavors, he influenced not at all the mind of Charles the Fifth. Cabot's demands, in case of undertaking the great conquest, were "provisions, ammunition, goods proper for trade, and a complete recruit of seamen and soldiers." These seeming exorbitant, the merchants interested in the squadron decided that their rights should escheat to the crown; but the Emperor, willing to avow his confidence in the navigator, agreed to stand personally responsible for the enterprise.

But Charles showed more generosity than foresight in this affair. At the very time of this proposal, Bourbon's soldiers were mutinous for pay; the Moluccas had been mortgaged;* and even the pecuniary assistance solicited by the Emperor from the Cortes, had been refused. The good will of a king, so straitened, of necessity spent itself in promises.

It was at this time, that Pizarro offered to reduce Peru solely at his own expense. He followed up the offer by personal importunity, and it was accepted. After an extravagant promise to provide every thing, and resign all conquests to the crown, the entire and exclusive range of the coast of Peru was granted to him; and thus was Cabot frustrated by the very sovereign who had nearly been his benefactor. If the seaman was at fault for immoderate requisitions, Charles was no less so for holding out hopes which his empty treasury could not fulfil.

* *Memoir of Cabot, p. 160.*

The facts in the case should clear the monarch from the imputations of neglect and dilatoriness, which many historians have cast upon his character.

During these negotiations in Spain, Cabot was awaiting anxiously the result of his embassy, and continuing to hope, until hope became folly. He was confirmed in his belief, that the waters of the Paraná would convey him to the mines of Potosi; and, while doubtful of the Emperor's pleasure, he improved and amused his men by exploring the country, and ascertaining the manners of the several tribes bordering on the La Plata. Whether the Emperor apprized him of his change of mind, or left him in uncertainty until he returned to Spain, their many delays must have been distressing to a band eager to penetrate a region, which promised a recompense for their previous deprivations.

Cabot and his crew were bold men, and left no region in the vicinity of the river unsearched. It required no little resolution in men anxiously expecting news from home, and who had seen one after another of their number drop away, to explore the strong-holds of savages, and gather knowledge at the risk of life and limb. One or two were often left in charge of the vessels, while the band rambled into the interior, trusting for shelter to the hospitality of the natives, or a temporary tent. The Spanish government, moreover, neglecting to send supplies, they were cast on their own resources for subsistence; and Herrera gives part of a report from Cabot to the Emperor, in which the productions of Brazil, and the improvements in various breeds of Spanish animals, are described with an accuracy of observation not unworthy the agriculturist or man of science. Cabot was endued with an elasticity of temper, which, united with sound principles and intelligence, enabled him to profit by every event. At home, he explained his projects to heedless sovereigns; at sea, won affection by courageous perseverance; and in a region of savages, while waiting the pleasure of his king, found time to instruct his followers, and stimulate them to industry.

Things were thus proceeding, when misfortune broke

loose on the little community. Those of Garcia's party, whom he had left behind, wanting the good influence of a Cabot, fell one day into a violent dispute with the natives, and at length so enraged them, that they declared vengeance against every white man on the river. Of course the little garrisons at Sanctus Spiritus and St. Salvador, though not the offenders, did not escape the indignation of the savages. The most hostile tribe was the Guaranis, a wantonly ferocious people, whose animosity made them forget that they had entered into an explicit treaty of peace with our navigator. After the affront, several meetings were secretly held, until their sanguinary project was perfected.

One morning, just before daybreak, this bloodthirsty race rushed in a body upon Sanctus Spiritus. The inmates, a part surprised asleep, and a part fatigued with previous exertions, could offer no resistance, and the fort was carried. The savages, elated with their good fortune, next besieged St. Salvador. But by this time, the alarm had spread, and the admiral was able to maintain his position, until he could prepare one of his largest vessels for sea. The others he determined to leave behind. Collecting, therefore, all the supplies which could be obtained, the little band, much reduced in number, and driven before a tribe of Indians, embarked for their native country. They landed in Spain in the year 1531, exactly five years from the time of their departure.

CHAPTER IV.

Cabot's Reception in Spain.—Resumes the Office of Pilot-Major.—Account of a personal Interview with Cabot.—His Private Character.—Relinquishes his Office and returns to England.—Edward the Sixth.—Charles the Fifth requests him to return to Spain.—His Occupations in England.—Errors with Regard to the Knighting of the Cabots.

CABOT was about fifty-three years of age, when he returned to Spain; and, after his wild life in South America, we are glad to find him holding office in civilized society. It is not easy to say what was his reception at the Spanish court. One writer declares that he was received with coldness and ill nature, while the author of the 'Memoir' strives to show that his report was perfectly satisfactory. Perhaps neither is entirely correct. The fact, that the merchants withdrew from the concern, shows them to have been disappointed, but surely Charles did not venture to frown on a man, whom he had ungenerously deluded, and who originated the project, that, in Pizarro's hands, now promised the monarch wealth and reputation.

The Spaniards were piqued at Cabot's severity to the mutineers, but they could not sully the fame he had acquired by his conduct in the La Plata. His crew could bear witness to his composure in times of great and most varied danger. Moreover, his generosity in alluding to the better fortunes of Columbus won him many friends; without the jealousy of a selfish man, he did not hesitate to declare his exploits to be "more divine than human." For these and similar reasons his resumption of the office of Pilot-Major afforded general satisfaction, and for many years his occupation was one of great emolument and honor.

Several passages in the old authors show, as clearly as documents so imperfect and antiquated can show, that, besides being esteemed a strictly honorable man, he was the first navigator of the day. A thorough theorist, he had learned by practice how theory was useful. Charles the Fifth relied entirely on his opinion, which was always readily given. In all their intercourse, no allusion is found to the character or progress of Pizarro. To the one, his name probably brought a twinge of conscience; and the other, however glad to aid a rival by his propositions, must have felt that the monarch's favors were unjustly conferred. A contemporary writer thus speaks of him at this time: "He is so valiant a man, and so well practised in all things pertaining to navigations, and the science of cosmographie, that at this present he hath not his like in all Spaine." On another occasion, a gentleman of the time, desiring some important maritime information, was referred to Cabot; and his account of their personal interview, even now that three centuries have elapsed, is highly interesting. The writer says, "It was tolde mee that there was in the city a valiant man, a Venetian* born, named Sebastian Cabot, who had charge of the navigations of the Spaniards, being an expert man in that science, and one that could make cardes for the sea with his owne hand, and, by this report, seeking his acquaintance, I found him *a very gentle and courteous person, who entertained mee friendly*, and showed mee many things, and among other a large mappe of the world, with certaine particuler navigations, as well of the Portugals as of the Spaniards, and he spake further unto mee to this effect."†

Several like hints disclose to us the private character of Sebastian Cabot. His warm ambition was changed into maturer hopes, and we can anticipate an old age, calm, benevolent, and useful. Whilst holding the office of Pilot-Major, he frequently led in person small naval expeditions, which served to keep alive public interest,

*This error has already been exposed.

† Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 7.

more than to promote discovery. His leisure was probably occupied with preparing the documents relative to his eventful life which carelessness and accident have destroyed.

These were doubtless among the pleasantest years of Cabot's life. He had, indeed, considering his extensive plans, been singularly unsuccessful; neither does it appear that domestic comforts were gathered thickly around him. But he was a man whom many, like Richard Eden, delighted to consider their "very friend, and have sometimes keepe them company in their own houses." He had, moreover, done the world much service, only failing because he intended to do much more. He sought distinction, because it increased his usefulness.

He thus concludes a letter some years after the La Plata expedition. "After this, I made many other voyages, which I now pretermit, and, waxing olde, I give myself to rest from such travels, because there are nowe many young and lustie pilots and mariners of good experience, by whose forwardness I do rejoyce in the fruit of my labours, and rest with the charge of this office, as you see."* This is the language of a man, who could view disappointment in the proper light, preferring a competency and the general respect, to success gained by intrigue, or the favors showered upon a parasite. By this time, he must have seen, that his name would never rival that of Columbus; that it would even be shaded by it; and yet we find him reviewing the past with gratitude, and anticipating the future with more than ordinary calmness.

Seventeen years thus elapsed, when the natural feeling of an old man induced Cabot to relinquish his situation in Spain, in order to dwell again in his native country. It is a pleasant thing, after all his wanderings, to see him turning his steps homeward. We rejoyce when the recipient of foreign favor remembers the land which gave him birth. In the year 1548, while in full favor with the

* Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 7.

Emperor, he returned to England. Spain lost an exemplary officer; he knew, better than any one, her naval interest, and his eminence was acknowledged both by the king and people. But Charles the Fifth had nothing to fear from Cabot's intimate knowledge of his affairs; no combination of circumstances could have induced him to use his information against a sovereign, in whose confidence he had gained it.

Edward the Sixth had just reached the British throne, when our navigator returned, and fixed his residence in Bristol. Public hopes had been much raised touching the young king. Having enjoyed an excellent education, and naturally fond of naval affairs, it was thought that his reign would be memorable for the encouragement of maritime excellence. "In childhood," Burnet tells us, "he knew all the harbors and ports both of his own dominions, and of France and Scotland, and how much water they had, and what was the way of coming into them." Add to this, that nature's other gifts exactly fitted him for a popular monarch, and that, in the second year of his reign, Sebastian Cabot, an old man respected in private life, and the greatest seaman of the age, became one of his subjects, and no one will fail to anticipate brilliant naval adventures.

When Charles the Fifth perceived this state of things, he repented that on any consideration he had lost his Pilot-Major; accordingly the English monarch received before long a formal demand, that "Sebastian Cabote, Grand Pilot of the Emperor's Indies, then in England, might be sent over to Spain, as a very necessary man for the Emperor, whose servant he was, and had a pension of him." These latter words might lead us to think that Charles, hoping his removal would be temporary, had wished to continue Cabot's pension; at any rate, it is gratifying to see what golden opinions the seaman had won by his services in Spain. The request was not complied with.

It is difficult to ascertain precisely what Cabot's office was after he returned to England. He had expected to continue in private life in his native city; but the impor-

tunities of Edward changed his determination, and it is supposed, by Hakluyt and others, that he was appointed to an office like that held under Charles the Fifth, then first created, and that he bore the title of Grand Pilot of England. However this may be, he was director of all maritime enterprises, being consulted, as we shall see, on every occasion, and experiencing, in an eminent degree, the royal munificence. Edward's respect for his character, and gratitude for his services, showed themselves by many marks of favor ; among others, a generous pension, as appears by the following document.

“Edward the Sixt, by the grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, to all Christian people, to whom these presents shall come, sendeth greeting. Know yee, that we, in consideration of the good and acceptable service done, and to be done, unto us by our beloved servant, Sebastian Cabota, of our speciale grace, certaine knowledge, meere motion, and by the advice and counsel of our most honourable uncle, Edward Duke of Somerset, governor of our person, and protector of our kingdomes, dominions, and subjects, and of the rest of our counsaile, have given and granted, and, by these presents, do give and grant to the said Sebastian Cabota, a certaine annuitie, or yerely revenue of one hundred, threescore and sixe pounds, thirteene shillings four pence sterling, to have, enjoy, and yerely receive the foresaid annuities, or yerely revenue to the foresaid Sebastian Cabota during his natural life, out of our treasurie at the receipt of our exchequer at Westminster, at the hands of our treasurers and paymasters, there remayning for the time being, at the feast of the Annuntiation of the blessed Virgin Mary, the Nativitie of S. John Baptist, S. Michael y^e Archangel, and the Nativitie of our Lord, to be paid by equal portions. In witnesse whereof, we have caused these our letters to be made patents ; witnesse the King at Westminster, the sixt day of January, in the second yeere of his raigne. The yeere of our Lord 1548.”*

* Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 10.

Besides the above, a salary was granted at the same rate, "from the feast of S. Michael last past unto this present time."

Cabot seems to have been much indebted in these affairs to the abovementioned uncle, the Duke of Somerset, who first introduced him to his royal nephew. The terms of the above pension would seem to show, that Cabot was actually in office; but of his duties we have no particular account. On one occasion, we find a French pilot, who "had frequented the coast of Brazil eighteen voyages," giving testimony to Sir John Yorke "before Sebastian Cabote;" and a long anonymous article is recorded by Hakluyt, descriptive of the voyage "unto the mouth of the river of Plata, and along up within the sayd river," which has been supposed with great plausibility to be Cabot's own testimony. From these fragments of testimony, it is, perhaps, probable, that, without holding any formal title, he was regarded with universal confidence.

I shall now advert to a point, about which misrepresentation and error have thickly clustered. Nearly two thirds of the old writers confer on one or both of the Cabots the honors of knighthood. Campbell gives us the memoir of "Sir John Cabot," and Purchas commences a couplet,—

"Hail, Sir Sebastian! England's northern pole,
Virginia's finder," &c.*

Henry, in his 'History of Great Britain,' falls into a similar error; indeed, most readers may have expected to meet the subject of this biography with the title of knight. Now that modern ingenuity has given us the means, it is amusing to perceive how minute an error has caused the misapprehension.†

In the palace at Whitehall, formerly hung a portrait of Sebastian Cabot, under which was the following inscription; "*Effigies Seb. Caboti Angli filii Joannis Caboti militis aurati.*" This possessed just enough of oracular

* Purchas's Pilgrims.

† See 'Memoir of Cabot,' ch. xxvii.

ambiguity to cause great trouble. Were the terms "*militis aurati*" to be applied to John or Sebastian? Purchas saw the portrait, and immediately knighted the latter, while Campbell quotes this very inscription to prove, that the father for certain services became Sir John Cabot. We have not mentioned either as having been knighted; and, if we will guard against inaccuracies of translation, we shall see that the above inscription affords no ground for ascribing such an honor to either. *Eques* and not *miles* would have been the Latin term to designate knighthood. Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Hugh Willoughby, Sir Martin Frobisher, and Sir Francis Drake are mentioned by Hakluyt, each with the term *eques auratus*, and no other of their rank is once styled otherwise.*

* Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 137. A particular account of this portrait is contained in the appendix to the 'Memoir of Cabot.' It is believed to have been painted by Holbein. The picture is now in the United States, having been purchased by Mr. Richard Biddle

CHAPTER V.

netic Variation.—*Cabot's early Observations.*—*Ex-
ains his Theory in Public to the King.*—*Bad Con-
tion of English Commerce.*—*Cabot consulted.*—*His
 remedy.*—*Opposed by 'The Stilyard.'*—*Nature of
 at Corporation.*—*Remonstrances laid before the
 rory Council.*—*The Stilyard broken up.*—*Prepara-
 ons for Expeditions to the North.*—*Cabot furnishes
 e Instructions.*—*A Part of the Squadron under Chan-
 llor reaches Russia.*—*Chancellor's personal Inter-
 view with the Emperor.*—*The Adventurers obtain a
 Charter.*—*Change in Cabot's Fortune.*—*King Ed-
 ward's Death.*—*Cabot's Pension suspended for two
 Years.*—*Characteristic Anecdote.*—*Cabot resigns his
 Pension.*—*His Death.*

THE remainder of our narrative will contain none of
bustle of adventure; but it will exhibit what is rather
markable, a man of more than threescore years and
, devoting himself to the illustration of new truths,
originating great national enterprises. Cabot's mind
ained to the last its vigor, and the experience of his
nhood was an unfailing fund of information.

In one of his early voyages he observed a variation in
magnetic needle; but his observations, although care-
ly recollected, at the time only found a place in his
morandum book. No theory of the variation had
en started; and, until he could frame one, he chose to
r little of what he had seen. Thirty years afterwards,
e mystery still remaining inexplicable, he was surprised
perceive the same phenomenon in the La Plata. His
tive and roving life then prevented him from giving
ach attention to the subject, and he could only note
refully the variations, now and then stealing a moment
seek the solution of the problem.

During all changes of fortune, he did not forget what he had seen; and availing himself of the information of contemporaries, he now announced a matured theory of the variation of the needle. There is something in this, characteristic of the man. He mostly withheld his observations for forty years, lest the superstitious might reject or fear what the scientific could not explain. Had he been less cautious, he would have been indisputably acknowledged the discoverer of this great wonder of nature.

When Edward heard of Cabot's theory of the variation, with his usual ardor he insisted on a convocation of the learned men of the kingdom, before whom the venerable seaman had the honor of explaining the phenomenon to his young sovereign. He showed the extent of the variation, and that it was different in different latitudes. Unfortunately we are without the papers of Cabot, himself, and are thus unable to know precisely the theory offered to the prince. Although not the correct one, it attracted general attention, and added to the esteem which our navigator now enjoyed in his native land.*

Notwithstanding young Edward's willingness to encourage maritime enterprise, English commerce, about the year 1551, became almost extinct. Native produce was in no demand; and, while foreign nations easily found markets, there seemed to be a general stagnation in the trade, which had once raised England to opulence. This affected equally the pride and purses of the English merchants, and they resolved to detect the cause of the evil, and reestablish their credit. The first men in the kingdom took the matter in hand; "certaine grave citizens of London, and the men of great wisdom and carefull for the good of their countrey, began to thinke with themselves howe this mischief might bee remedied." After conferring on the subject, they agreed to consult

* Livio Sanuto, a noble Venetian, on learning Cabot's eminence from a friend, applied to him for information on the subject of magnetic variation, and received a chart marked with the degrees in various parts of the world, and a full account of his several observations.

Sebastian Cabot. "And whereas at the same time one Sebastian Cabota, a man in those days very renowned, happened to be in London, they began first of all to deale and consult diligently with him." From this moment Cabot's influence is perceptible in every stage of the investigation.

He was enabled to propose a project, which he had long since conceived, and which has eventually secured to England one of her most valuable branches of trade. He advised his countrymen to seek a new northern market, telling them, that, although neighboring nations had been sated with their commodities, doubtless tribes might be found to remunerate their ingenuity. The proposition seeming favorable to the merchants and the King, it was agreed that three ships "should be prepared and furnished for the search and discovery of the northern part of the world."

But, at this point, the adventurers were opposed by a powerful foreign corporation, established in London, under the title of *The Stilyard*, and claiming, what they had long possessed, a monopoly of the trade with the northern European ports. It consisted chiefly of the factors of extensive mercantile houses in Antwerp and Hamburg, who, by art and good fortune, had obtained command of most English markets, and used their superiority to ruin native merchants. Their impositions had become insufferable, and now, when they endeavored to fetter lawful enterprise, Cabot determined to rid his country of such an encumbrance. He ascertained them to be guilty of certain fraudulent acts, and, in the name of the new company, laid a remonstrance before Edward's privy council.

Such an established favorite was not likely to offer a fruitless petition, particularly as the young King must himself have perceived the justice of the complaints. Parts of his Majesty's private journal, which have been preserved, show his interest in the dispute, and the result is recorded, one may fancy, with something like triumph. "*February 23d, 1551.* A decree was made by the board, that, upon knowledge and information of their

charters, they had found; first, that they (the Stilyard) were no sufficient corporation; secondly, that their number, names, and nature was unknown; thirdly, that, when they had forfeited their liberties, King Edward the Fourth did restore them on this condition, that they should color no strangers' goods, which they had done. For these considerations, sentence was given that they had forfeited their liberties, and were in like case with other strangers."

When the Stilyard heard the decision, they were so reluctant to relinquish their monopolies, that ambassadors were immediately despatched to the English court, "to speak in their behalf." Again the matter came before the privy council, and the former judgement was confirmed. A few days after this memorable defeat, Cabot received a donation from the King. "To Sebastian Cabota, the great seaman, two hundred pounds, by way of the King's majesty's reward, dated in March, 1551." This tells more plainly than any comment, of his successful exertions in the affair.

Obstacles being removed, the expedition rapidly advanced. Great pains were taken to provide plank, "very strong and well seasoned," master-workmen were engaged in the construction of the vessels, the merchants spared no expense in the provision of stores, and, for the first time in England, the ships' bottoms were sheathed with copper. Sir Hugh Willoughby, with whose melancholy fate most readers are familiar, was, after some debate, appointed Chief Captain; "both," as we are told, "*by reason of his goodly personage*, (for he was of tall stature,) as also for his singular skill in the services of warre." The second in command was Richard Chancellor, a shrewd and persevering man, who had been educated with much care by the father of Sir Philip Sidney. We may form some idea of Cabot's strength of mind, when we know, that although between seventy and eighty years old, he superintended personally these extensive outfits; but our admiration should not stop here. That nothing might be wanting to complete success, he wrote, with his own hand, a volume of instructions in duty,

which were ordered to be read before the ships' companies every week, and which have ever been regarded as a model of high principle and good sense, as well as a proof of sagacity and an extended knowledge of human nature.*

On the 20th of May, 1553, naval stores and crews were in readiness, and the squadron, consisting of the *Bona Esperanza*, of one hundred and twenty tons, Sir Hugh Willoughby, master, the *Edward Bonaventure*, of one hundred and sixty tons, Richard Chancellor, master, and the *Bona Confidentia*, of ninety tons, Cornelius Durfooth, master, each furnished with a pinnace and boat, dropped down the river to Greenwich. The spirits of the men were high, amid the bustle of leave-taking and crowds of spectators, although occasionally damped by bidding farewell to familiar faces, which the dangers before them rendered it probable many would behold no more. The large ships floating slowly downward, the sailors dressed all alike in "watchet or skie-colored cloth," and the crowded decks, filled with impatient crews, must have formed a highly-exciting scene.

The court happened to be at Greenwich as they approached; and "presently the courtiers came running out, and the common people flockt together, standing very thick upon the shoare; the privie counsel, they lookt out at the windows of the court, and the rest ranne up to the toppes of the towers; the shippes hereupon discharge their ordinance, and shoot off their pieces after the manner of warre, and of the sea, insomuch that the toppes of the hills sounded therewith, the valleys and the waters gave an echo, and the mariners, they shouted in such sort, that the skie rang again with the noise thereof."†

* They were entitled, "Ordinances, Instructions, and Advertisements of, and for the Direction of, the intended Voyage for Cathay, compiled, made, and delivered by the right worshipful M. Sebastian Cabota, Esq., Governour of the Mysterie and Companie of the Merchants, Adventurers," &c. &c.

† Hakluyt, Vol. I. p. 245.

The only thing to lessen the happiness of the occasion, was the absence of the young monarch, whose exertions had given existence to the expedition. He beheld none of the regrets or rejoicings, being confined by the illness which soon caused his death. As the vessels left port, shrouds and mainyards were crowded by those eager to take the last look of recognition; presently the land faded in the distance, and, mutually agreeing to meet at the castle of Wardhouse, in Norway, should mischance disperse the squadron, they committed themselves to the Ruler of the ocean.

We cannot follow minutely this band of adventurers. We have spoken thus much of it, because their enterprise was the last of importance in which Cabot was concerned, and because of the distinguished services he rendered it, at a time of life when most are content to repose in ease and inaction. The dreaded evil was experienced, and, on the very day of the agreement to keep together, the vessels were separated by a furious tempest. Sir Hugh Willoughby, finding a passage to the east impracticable, resolved, on the 18th of September, to winter with Durfooth, in Lapland. But the severity of the climate proved fatal to the wearied frames of their party, and their heroic commander was obliged to behold his men fall victims to a death, whose horrors were soon to overtake himself.

One of the most melancholy records ever preserved, is Sir Hugh's manuscript journal, detailing their fruitless attempts to reach Wardhouse, their resolution to pass the winter on an unknown coast, and their extreme destitution after the landing was effected. The commander, it is supposed, lingered until the month of January, 1554; the two ships were found deserted and decayed, and the journal lying beside the body of its author. The sad diary is said to have contained a description of the wolves and other carnivorous animals, which flocked around the bodies of the first victims to the climate. The last entry is thus mournfully abrupt. "*September.* We sent out three men south-southwest, to search if they could find people, who went three dayes journey,

but could find none; after that, we sent other three men westward foure dayes journey, which also returned without finding any people. Then sent we three men southeast three dayes journey, who, in like sorte, returned without finding of people, or any similitude of habitation." "Here endeth," the historian adds, "Sir Hugh Willoughbie his note, which was written with his owne hand."*

Richard Chancellor had the good fortune to reach Wardhouse, whence with singular resolution he prosecuted his voyage, and, after a passage through unknown latitudes, where the sunlight was perpetual, he landed at Archangel. The inhabitants at first fled in terror; but, mindful of Cabot's injunctions, he so succeeded in soothing their apprehensions by mild treatment, that they threw themselves at his feet, and supplied him liberally with such things as he needed. The natives being forbidden by the emperor to trade with foreigners, several undertook a journey to Moscow, in order to represent to him the object of Chancellor in visiting their shores. The emperor received the representation with courtesy, and invited the Englishmen to a personal interview. Chancellor of course embraced the opportunity, and, providing himself with a sledge, soon reached the city of Moscow. He there related the design of his voyage, and before long laid the foundation of a permanent and extensive trade between England and Russia.

There is something heart-stirring in the manful efforts of these early travellers; they teach us of modern times a good lesson of self-forgotten, generous enthusiasm. Chancellor so represented the views and intentions of the English government, that Russia, it would seem, with little hesitation, acceded to his propositions. In the year 1554 or 1555, a charter was granted to the company of English adventurers, and Sebastian Cabot, in consideration of having originated the enterprise, was therein named governor for life.

Soon afterwards the Emperor of Russia granted them

* Hakluyt, Vol. I. p. 237.

certain privileges, which show their commercial intercourse to have been extensive. The articles are called, "A Copie of the first Privileges graunted by the Emperour of Russia to the English Marchants in the Yeere 1555," and thus commence; "John Vasilvich, by the grace of God, Emperour of Russia, Great Duke of Novogrode, Moscovia, &c. To all people that shall see, reade, heare, or understand these presents, greeting. Know ye, therefore, that we of our grace speciale, meere motion, certaine knowledge, have given and granted, and by these presents for us, our heires, and successours, do give and grant as much as in us is and lieth, unto Sebastian Cabota, Governour, Sir George Barnes, Knight," &c.*

From this time the Russia trade increased in value and extent, until it gave a fresh impulse to productive industry in England. Instead of suffering under foreign monopolies, native artisans found fair markets; while, on the other hand, its intercourse with the English gradually secured to the Russian nation, civilization, intelligence, and comfort. Cabot must have observed with unspeakable delight the ultimate success of this expedition. Four ships were purchased for the trade, and their number annually increased.

Probably the earliest specimens of the English mercantile style, are to be found in the correspondence between the Russian and the English companies at this period.† The first articles of barter were cloths, tar, hemp, and feathers; afterwards they shipped copper, steel, and in short those various products, both natural and artificial, which form the basis of all commerce between civilized nations. As if by magic, the complete stagnation in English trade was succeeded by a healthy mercantile circulation.

The Emperour continued his favors toward the new traders, and a branch of the company was established at Moscow. He sent an ambassador to England with in-

* Hakluyt, Vol. I. p. 265.

† These letters, which are worthy of a careful perusal, may be found at length in Hakluyt, Vol. I. p. 297.

structions to complete and confirm the arrangement. The Russia trade soon became important. It was conceived with much boldness, and sustained with unflinching spirit. Cabot was the director of every movement; his old age, instead of gliding away in debility or sloth, was occupied by the innumerable cares arising from his connexion with the adventurers. The whale fishery of Spitzbergen, and the famous Newfoundland fisheries, were improved, if not established by him at this period. His ambition seems to have been, to do good to the last moment. "With strict justice," observes Campbell, "it may be said of Sebastian Cabot, that he was the author of our maritime strength, and opened the way to those improvements, which have rendered us so great, so eminent, so flourishing a people."

Cabot was now eighty years old; and after following him through so many changes of fortune, we have to regret, that gloom should overspread his latter days. But, like many others who have depended on the justice of crowned heads, he found, that gratitude did not invariably follow meritorious exertion. We must retrace our steps a moment to ascertain the origin of the vexations we are going to record.

Not long after the departure of the first expedition to Russia, young Edward died. This monarch had respected Cabot's age, and recompensed his talents; he had given life to naval enterprise by liberality, and won the confidence of his subjects by an intimate acquaintance with their interests. His death was in many respects a public loss. To Cabot, as the sequel shows, it was almost ruinous.

The King was a warm Protestant; and, on the accession of the Catholic Mary, eager to spread her bigoted faith, his favorites stood no chance of fair treatment. It is not probable, that insult was shown to the venerable navigator, but he was regarded with coldness, doubly severe because partially concealed; he was made often to feel his dependence on the crown, and he saw younger men daily gaining the royal confidence to which he was entitled.

The first open neglect was in regard to his means of support. His pension, which expired at Edward's death, was not renewed for more than two years. His cheerfulness did not desert him now that his private circumstances were inauspicious. Without pretending to be a philosopher, he used all with benevolence and generosity, uniting, as is the privilege of age, good counsel and a good example. The following extract from the journal of Stephen Burroughs gives us much insight into his character.

“The 27th being Munday, the right worshipful Sebastian Cabota came aboard our pinesse at Gravesende, accompanied with divers gentlemen and gentlewomen, who, after that they had viewed our pinesse, and tasted of such cheer as we could make them aboard, they went on shore, giving to our mariners right liberal rewards; and the good olde gentleman, master Cabota, gave to the poore most liberall almes, wishing them to pray for the good fortune and prosperous success of the *Searchthrift*, our pinesse. And then, at the signe of the Christopher, hee and his friends banketed, and made me, and them that were in the company, great cheere; and so very joy that he had to see the towardness of our intended discovery, *he entered into the dance himselfe*, among the rest of the young and lusty company; which being ended, hee and his friends departed, most gently commending us to the governance of Almighty God.”* This gayety of temper is remarkable, considering his private necessities. The remainder of his career is brief and gloomy.

The Queen had occupied the throne but one year, when, to the dismay of her subjects, she gave her hand to Philip of Spain. Matters had already undergone a disagreeable change, and this union with an intriguing and jealous sovereign promised England little advantage. Philip came into his new dominions exceedingly envious of the English naval superiority; and Cabot, the man to whom it was chiefly ascribable, and who had refused the order of Philip's father to return to Spain, could hope

*Hakluyt, Vol. I. p. 274.

little courtesy at his hands. Philip's first act was to declare war against France, and Mary was forced to resort to all expedients to supply the requisite funds. Seven days after the King reached London, Cabot resigned his pension. Of the neglect and cold insinuations which led to such a step, and of the wounded feelings of the beneficiary, no one, who knows the state of the kingdom and the character of the man, can fail to conceive.

Shortly afterward, indeed, the pension was renewed, but no longer in favor of Cabot alone. One half was granted to a William Worthington. With Mary the new favorite was in the ascendant; she committed to Worthington all Cabot's manuscripts, which have since eluded the most patient search.

The neglect, which we have lately seen shown to him, followed him to the last; and but for his friend Richard Eden, we had known nothing of his end. Eden stood by his death-bed, and he tells us, with his usual simplicity, that "the good old man had not even in the article of death shaken off all worldlie vanitie." He still hovered over the scene of his adventures; he thought of his boyhood, and, with that sudden mental illumination, which precedes the more perfect light of another existence, reviewing his past struggles, he "spoke flightily" of a divine revelation with regard to an infallible method of ascertaining the longitude, which he might disclose to no mortal. Truly, the ruling passion was strong in death! He died calmly as he had lived; and, it is supposed, in the city of London. But although, as has been well said, "he gave a continent to England," we know neither the date of his death, nor does the humblest monument show where his remains were interred.

Such were the adventures, and such is an outline of the character, of Sebastian Cabot. His mind, perhaps, cannot be properly regarded as of the highest order. It was better fitted to investigate by help of data, than to create for itself; to draw sound conclusions, than to wander in speculations. He had strong common sense, and could view the most intricate subjects clearly and calmly; he had command over himself, over his feelings, and over

his mental powers. Hence, he was composed in danger, and cheerful in affliction; and, being generally directed by high moral principle, failure, of which he experienced a great deal, was robbed of half its pangs. He erred at times in judgement, and often conceived what he could not execute. But what he discovered and divulged is of the highest value; and, in a career like his, a man must attempt much to accomplish even a little. He conferred many benefits on his fellow men; and, although he received very inadequate compensation, he was always a good citizen, a warm friend, and a faithful public officer.

LIFE
OF
HENRY HUDSON;
BY
HENRY R. CLEVELAND.



HENRY HUDSON.

CHAPTER I.

Hudson's early History little known.—First Voyage, in 1607.—Sails from Gravesend.—Makes Discoveries on the Coast of Greenland.—Sails thence to Spitzbergen.—Proceeds northward, to the Eighty-second Degree of Latitude.—Attempts to find a Passage around the North of Greenland.—Driven back by the Ice.—Returns to the southern Parts of Spitzbergen, and thence to England.

IN few men are more rare combinations of talent required, than in discoverers and explorers of new countries and seas. Invincible courage, patience and fortitude under suffering, daring enterprise tempered by prudence, promptness and decision united with calm reflection, sagacity and fertility of invention, strong common sense combined with enthusiasm and vivid imagination, the power of commanding other minds joined to gentleness of manner and ready sympathy, are some of the more prominent traits in the character of this class of men.

Among those, who were peculiarly gifted in these attributes, was the subject of the present memoir, HENRY HUDSON, the bold navigator of the Arctic Seas, the discoverer of the vast inland sea, and of the river in North America, which bear his name.

Of the early history of Hudson hardly any thing is known. He was a native of England, a scientific and professed navigator, and ranked with the most distinguished seamen of his age. He was a contemporary and friend of the famous Captain John Smith, and rivalled

him in intrepidity and perseverance. He resided in London, was married and had one son.* We are not informed in what way he acquired his practical skill in navigation; but, as he lived in an age immediately succeeding the most dazzling discoveries, and while these discoveries were occupying, with absorbing interest, the mind of the whole civilized world, it is not improbable, that his nautical education may have been received from some one of the great navigators, who followed immediately in the footsteps of Columbus, and explored the new world, which his genius had revealed.

We are first introduced to him by his own journal of a voyage, undertaken at the charge of "certaine worshipfull Merchants of London," in the year 1607. The object of the voyage was to explore the coast of Greenland, and pass round it to the northwest, or directly under the Pole; or, in his own words, "for to discover a passage by the North Pole to Japan and China."†

The crew consisted in all of twelve persons, including Henry Hudson, the master, and his son John, a boy; all of whom, we are informed, went to the church of Saint Ethelburge, in Bishopsgate Street, a few days before sailing, to partake solemnly of the holy sacrament; a pious practice, which seems to have been very general in those days, and which was highly appropriate for men who were about to encounter the hardships, terrors, and uncertainties of a voyage of discovery in unknown regions.

They sailed from Gravesend, on the 1st of May, 1607, and, taking a northerly course, made the Shetland Islands in twenty-six days. The needle was here found to have no variation; but, four days afterward, Hudson "found the needle to incline seventy-nine degrees under the horizon;" and, on the 4th of June, he observed a variation of five degrees westwardly. His course, after losing sight of the Shetland Isles, was northwesterly; the object being to reach the coast of Greenland.

* Yates and Moulton's *History of the State of New York*, Vol I. p. 198.

† Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 567.

On the 11th of June, he saw six or seven whales near the ship, the promise of a harvest, which was destined subsequently to prove of such immense profit to his country and to Holland. Two days afterwards, early in the morning, land was discovered ahead, with ice; and, there being a thick fog, he stood away south by east, six or eight leagues. The weather was so cold, that the sails and ropes were coated with ice; the wind blowing a gale from the northeast. About eight o'clock in the morning, it cleared up, and Hudson was able to see the land distinctly, stretching away northeast by north, and northeast, to the distance of about nine leagues. In his Journal, he says, "This was very high land, most part covered with snow. The nether part was uncovered. At the top, it looked reddish, and underneath a blackish clay, with much ice lying about it."* There was a quantity of fowl on this coast, and a whale was seen close by the shore. Hudson named the headland, thus discovered, *Young's Cape*, probably from its being first seen by James Young, one of his crew. Near this cape was a "very high mount, like a round castle," which he named the *Mount of God's Mercy*. This was on the coast of Greenland.

He continued northeasterly along the coast, encountering a succession of fogs, gales of wind, rains, and snows, occasionally driven from his course by head winds, and at one time lying to for the space of forty-eight hours. His purpose was, to ascertain whether the land he had seen was an island, or part of Greenland; but, being discouraged by the continued fogs, which hid the land from his view, he determined to steer for *Newland*, or Spitzbergen, and the course was altered to the northeast. At length the weather cleared up, and they enjoyed the comfort of a bright sun, after eighteen days of continued fogs and clouds.

After sailing on this course about fifteen or sixteen leagues, he saw land on the larboard, or left hand, about four leagues distant, stretching northeast and southwest.

* Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 567.

There was a vast number of birds circling around the land, with black backs and white bodies; and many floating pieces of ice, which they were obliged carefully to avoid. The fog returned again, and Hudson feared that he was embayed, from the quantities of ice about the ship. He therefore steered northeast for five or six leagues, keeping a diligent lookout for the eastward termination of the land, and afterwards stood to the south.

He soon changed his course to the northeast again; and, the weather clearing up, he saw land at the distance of about twelve leagues, in the latitude of seventy-three degrees. This land appeared lofty and covered with snow, and in the north part were seen some very high mountains. The weather in this latitude was much less severe than that which they experienced in the neighborhood of Young's Cape. This land he did not explore any further, being prevented by fogs, calms, and contrary winds; he named it the *Land of Hold with Hope*.

In his journal, Hudson apologizes for steering so far westwardly, instead of making due north for the Pole. He says, that he was prompted by a desire to see that part of Greenland, which he supposed was hitherto undiscovered. Moreover, being in the vicinity of this land, it was natural to expect westerly winds, which would greatly favor his approach to the Pole. "And," he adds, "considering we found lands contrary to that which our cards make mention of, we accounted our labor so much the more worth. And, for aught that we could see, it is like to be a good land and worth the seeing."*

On the 24th, the master's mate again saw high land on the larboard, which fell away to the northwest the more they advanced; and this was the last point of Greenland which presented itself to them. Hudson now turned to the northward and eastward, encountering constant fogs; but, being in so high latitude, that the sun was above the horizon the whole twenty-four hours, he was the less incommoded by the thick weather.

By the 26th of June, he saw flocks of birds similar to

* Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 568.

those he had seen on the coast of Greenland; he concluded that land was not far off, though, from the dense fog, he could see nothing of it. But the next morning, about one or two o'clock, the fog cleared up from the sea, and he saw the coast of Spitzbergen, or *Newland*, a name, which he says the Dutch had given to it. The land was covered with fog, and the ice was lying very thick all along the shore, for fifteen or sixteen leagues. At noon, he found himself to be in the latitude of seventy-eight degrees, and he supposed the land in sight to be Vogelhoeck, a projecting point in the western coast of Spitzbergen.*

* Foster remarks, that "the honor of the discovery of Spitzbergen belongs to Hudson."—*History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the North*, p. 326. It is also asserted in Yates and Moulton's *History of the State of New York*, (Vol. I. p. 199,) that to Hudson is awarded the honor of discovering Spitzbergen. The same statement had been previously made by Dr. Belknap, (*Amer. Biog.*, Vol. I. p. 395,) and by Dr. Miller, (*Collect. N. Y. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. I. p. 28.) It appears very clearly, however, that Hudson was not the first discoverer of Spitzbergen; as the journal written by himself proves to us, that he knew of its existence and position previously to seeing it, and he recognised the portion of it, which he first saw, as the cape or headland called *Vogelhoeck* by the Dutch. The island was certainly seen, and probably first discovered, by William Barentz, of Amsterdam. This appears from a Latin work, entitled, *Descriptio ac Delineatio Geographica Detectionis Freti sive Transitus ad Occasum supra Terras Americanas in Chinam atque Japonem ducturi*, published at Amsterdam, in 1613, twelve years before Hudson's Journal was published in Purchas's *Pilgrims*. The author of this work says, that Barentz and Cornelius, in the year 1596, being on a voyage of discovery, in the hope of finding a northern passage to China, saw land in latitude 79 degrees 50 minutes, and that they named this land *Spitzbergen*, from its mountainous aspect, and the quantity of snow and ice that was seen. They also named a remarkable promontory of this island *Vogelhoeck*, from the number of birds they found there. The island was, therefore, certainly discovered before Hudson saw it.

Scoresby, in his *Account of the Arctic Regions*, (Vol. I. p. 20,) speaks of the *rediscovery* of Spitzbergen by Hudson. This expression seems incorrect, as Hudson himself mentions the name by which it was called by the Hollanders; from which it is evident, that the existence of the island was generally known before his voyage in 1607.

When Hudson first approaches the land, he speaks of it as the same that was "called *Newland* by the Hollanders," (*Purchas*, Vol. III. p. 571.) That the country was at first called by the two names of *Spitzbergen* and *Newland* is proved by the fact, that there is now in existence

He continued to ply to the north and northeast, in the hope of finding a passage to the north of the island, until the middle of July. And it was in this part of the voyage, that his patience and fortitude seem to have been most severely tried. Constantly hemmed in with ice, and in danger of having his ship crushed by the masses, encountering head winds and storms, and obliged to change his course almost daily, with disappointment meeting him at every step, he still continued to buffet the storms; availing himself of every moment of favorable weather to work to the northward, till fairly convinced of the impossibility, on account of the ice, of finding a passage by this side of the island. The sea appeared, at different times, blue, green, or black; and they saw a large number of morses, seals, and bears; which last animal afforded food to the crew, who ate so freely of the flesh one day, that many of them were made sick by it.

On the 14th of July, they saw a bay open towards the west, the shores of which were very high and rugged. The northerly point they named *Collins's Cape*, in honor of the boatswain, who first discovered it. A great number of whales were swimming about in the bay, one of which came under the keel, and "made her held," but did them no harm. Though there was a quantity of snow lying in the swamps and valleys near the shore, the weather was hot. Several of the crew went on shore, where they found and brought on board a pair of morse's teeth in the jaw; they also found some dozen or more deer's horns, and saw the footsteps of other animals. Two or three streams of fresh water pouring into the bay proved very grateful to the men, who were made thirsty by the heat of the weather. In the evening, a fine gale springing up, they steered northeast again.

a small quarto volume, entitled, *Histoire du Pays nommé Spitzberg, ou l'Isle de Terre Neuve*, published at Amsterdam, in 1613. The error of ascribing the first discovery to Hudson probably originated in a marginal note of Purchas, in which he says, "Newland, or Greenland, of which the Hollanders made a little discovery by Barentz." Hence it was inferred, that the *Newland* mentioned by Hudson was Greenland; which is refuted by his Journal.

The weather was warm and clear on the morning of the 16th, and Hudson perceived that he was almost encompassed with ice. The land extended northeast far into the eighty-first degree of latitude; but, on account of the ice, there was no passage to the north of it. Hudson therefore determined to sail round the southern extremity of the island, and then seek a passage to the northeast. He accordingly put the ship about, and laid his course southwardly, having been as far north as the eighty-second degree; a higher latitude than had yet been attained by any navigator.

He continued southwardly along the coast of Spitzbergen, having occasional glimpses of land, till the 25th of July, when he saw the land bearing north. He was now convinced, from the general prevalence of the winds since he had been on the coast, that it would be impossible to work his way to the northeast; he therefore abandoned the plan he had formed, of sailing round the southern extremity of the island, and determined to "prove his fortunes" by the west once more, hoping to go round the north of Greenland, and then return, by Davis's Straits, to England. His course was now, accordingly, shaped westward.

On the 27th, being nearly becalmed, they heard a great noise, occasioned by the ice and sea, and found that the sea was heaving them westward towards a large body of ice. The boat was got out, in the hope of towing the ship away from it, but the sea ran so high, that their efforts would have been of little avail. "In this extremity," says Hudson, "it pleased God to give us a small gale at northwest and by west. We steered away four leagues, till noon. Here we had finished our discovery, if the wind had continued that brought us hither, or if it had continued calm; but it pleased God to make this northwest and by west wind the means of our deliverance; which wind we had not found common in this voyage. God give us thankful hearts for so great deliverance!"

At noon the weather cleared up, and Hudson was convinced by the sky, which reflected the ice, that he could

find no passage to the north of Greenland. He therefore took advantage of a westerly wind, and steered to the southeast. He again saw the southern extremity of Spitzbergen, and continued his course to the south. For, finding the fogs more thick and troublesome than before, and that many of the stores were beginning to fail; the season, moreover, being so far advanced, that it would be impossible to make the projected voyage this year, even if it were practicable at the proper season; he determined to return to England.

He passed in sight of Cheries Island, and the weather being clear, he had a distinct view of the land, covered with craggy rocks. Continuing a southerly course through the month of August, he arrived at Tilbury Hope, on the Thames, September 15th, having been absent four months and a half.

CHAPTER II.

Hudson's second Voyage.—Sails from London with the Design of seeking a Northeastern Passage to India.—Passes the North Cape.—Obstructed by Ice.—Arrives at Nova Zembla.—Abandons the Hope of going further North.—Explores an Inlet, or River, in Nova Zembla.—Resolves to return.—Searches for Wiloughby's Land.—Arrives in England.

As soon as the season was sufficiently advanced, Hudson prepared for a second voyage of discovery, the object of which was to find a northeast passage to the East Indies, by going to the north of Nova Zembla. The crew amounted to fifteen persons, including Hudson and his young son, who accompanied him on all his voyages. The master's mate was a certain Robert Juet,* a man

* So, with Belknap, we prefer to modernize the spelling in Purchas, which is always *Juet*, (like *June, July, judge*,) except once *Juet*, (p. 576,) and once *IVET*, (p. 581, where it is printed in capitals, like HUDSON.) Yet in Harris's *Collection of Voyages*, where Purchas is copied and the spelling reformed, it is constantly printed *Ivet*.

of considerable nautical skill and some education, who accompanied Hudson on all his subsequent voyages, and was destined to act a conspicuous part in his adventures.

He sailed from London on the 22d of April, 1608, and after a month's sailing northward, till the 24th of May, he judged himself to be distant only sixteen leagues from the coast of Norway, in latitude of sixty-seven degrees. He had encountered constant fogs, till this time, though generally with favorable winds; but the weather now cleared up, and continued fair, yet so cold, that it caused the sickness of the carpenter and several of the crew. He plied constantly to the northward and northeast, as the wind permitted, and, in three days more, was in latitude so high north, that he took an observation at midnight, the sun being on the north meridian, five degrees and a half above the horizon.

On the 1st of June, there came a severe gale, with snow. This continued for two days, when the weather became fair again, and he saw the North Cape about eight leagues distant. There were also several Norway fishermen in sight. Continuing a northeasterly course, he came into the neighborhood of ice, the first he had seen upon the voyage. His wish was to make his way through it, and he consequently held his course, loosening some of it, and bearing away from the larger portions, till late in the afternoon, when he found the ice so thick and firm, that it was impossible to force a further passage through it, and he was obliged to return, having suffered no other harm than slightly rubbing the sides of his ship.

From this time, he made but a small advance to the north, the highest latitude which he reached being a little more than seventy-five degrees. He was on soundings nearly every day, finding much green ooze, and the water being whitish green. He saw great numbers of whales and porpoises, and he says the sea was covered with fowl. He also heard the bears roaring upon the ice, and saw an immense number of seals. The quantities of ice by which he was beset, and the head winds, constantly obstructed his progress northward, so that, instead of gaining, he found himself drifting to the south.

He was here compelled to abandon the hope of going to the north of Nova Zembla, being very near its western coast, and unable, from the ice, to work to northward. Turning southward, he saw the part of Nova Zembla called Swart-Cliff by the Dutch. On one occasion, the ship only two miles from the land, he sent six of the men on shore, to examine the appearance of the country, and to fill the water casks. They found the shore covered with long grass, and the ground boggy and overflowed in places with streams from melting snow; the weather being very hot. They also saw traces of deer, foxes, and bears, and picked up some fins of whales. In returning to the ship, they saw two or three troops or herds of morses, swimming near the boat. Soon after this, several of the crew landed, in the hope of killing some of the morses; and they found a cross standing near the shore, with the signs of fires that had been kindled there.

After remaining in this place a short time, they saw a great number of morses in the water, and hoisted sail, and got out the boat to tow the vessel along; in the hope, that by following the morses, they might discover their place of landing, where they might kill them. They continued the chase till they doubled a point, and came to anchor in the mouth of a broad river, or sound, near a small island. They found the position so dangerous, however, from the ice which was borne down the stream, that they were obliged to weigh anchor in the night, and stand out, a fine gale springing up just in season to free them from their danger; but they returned to the same anchorage as soon as the ice had been carried out to sea by the current.

Constantly on the watch for any thing that might aid his discovery of the northeast passage, Hudson had no sooner perceived the broad river, near the mouth of which he had anchored, than he formed hopes that he might here find a way to the other side of Nova Zembla. When he had ascertained the impossibility of sailing north of this island, it had been his intention to try the

passage of the Vaygats,* a strait which he knew would conduct him to the eastern side, unless obstructed with ice. "But," he says, "being here, and hoping by the plenty of morses we saw here to defray the charge of our voyage, and also that this sound might for some reasons be a better passage to the east of Nova Zembla than the Vaygats, if it held according to a hope conceived by the likeness it gave," he resolved to remain till he could explore it.

Soon after coming to anchor, he observed a large number of morses asleep on a projecting rock of the little island near him, and he therefore despatched the whole crew to hunt them. They only succeeded in killing one; all the rest having plunged into the water at their approach. The men landed, and found the shores high and steep; but, on ascending them, the land appeared quite level. After killing a great quantity of fowl, they returned on board. Several men were now sent, under the command of the mate, to examine the mouth of the river or sound, by which he hoped to find a passage. After an absence of about twenty-four hours, they returned, bringing a very large deer's horn, and a lock of white hair; also a large number of fowl, which they had shot. They had seen a herd of white deer, and they reported that the shore was covered with drift-wood, that there were convenient bays, and a river coming from the north, which appeared to be a favorite resort of the morses. As for the sound which they had been sent to examine, they had found it to be two or three leagues in breadth, the water of the color of the sea and very salt, and a strong current setting out; and they had no soundings at twenty fathoms.

This report determined him to explore the sound, and he accordingly weighed anchor, and stood in for the mouth of the river. He crossed a reef where the water was shallow; but after that it deepened again; and, having entered the river, he found it to be more than twenty

* The *Vaygats*, *Waygats*, or *Vaigatz*, is a strait between the southernmost parts of Nova Zembla and the northern coast of Russia.

fathoms deep. After ascending the stream to the distance of nine or ten leagues, he anchored again, the wind being ahead, and the current too strong to allow any further advance that day. He, however, sent his mate Juet and five of the men, in the boat, with provision and weapons, directing them to explore the stream, provided it continued deep, till they found it bending to the east or southward, promising to follow them with the ship as soon as the wind should prove favorable. The men returned the next day, much fatigued with the labor they had undergone. They had explored the river to the distance of six or seven leagues, when the water became very shallow, not more than four feet deep. Finding that it would be impossible for their ship to pass these shallows, they had not thought it worth while to explore the river beyond this point.

There was no choice, therefore, but to return; and accordingly he set sail and stood to the southwest again, as he tells us in his Journal, "with sorrow that our labor was in vain; for, had this sound held as it did make show of, for depth, breadth, safeness of harbor, and good anchor ground, it might have yielded an excellent passage to a more easterly sea."

The month of July was somewhat advanced, and Hudson had failed in two attempts to discover a north-east passage. The ship was not now provided with stores or conveniences sufficient for attempting the passage of the Vaygats, and there was nothing left but to return to England. He determined, however, to visit Willoughby's Land* on the way, as he wished to ascer-

* It has been asserted by English writers, and frequently repeated, that Sir Hugh Willoughby had discovered Spitzbergen. It appears, however, from Hudson's Journal of his second voyage, that he was not of this opinion, but considered Willoughby's Land as entirely distinct from Spitzbergen. He steered west for this land, being in latitude 71 degrees, while he well knew, that the most southerly point of Spitzbergen was several degrees to the north of this. In the old Dutch maps, *Willoughby's Land* is placed to the southeast of Spitzbergen.

The author of the Latin work cited in a former note, who is very accurate in his statements, maintains stoutly, that Willoughby's Land was not Spitzbergen, and cites a passage from the manuscript Journal of Willoughby to prove it. This passage agrees exactly with the Jour-

tain whether it was laid down correctly or not on the chart; and he supposed that he should find a large number of morses there, as they were driven from the coast of Nova Zembla by the ice. His course was, therefore, laid westerly, being in the latitude of seventy-one degrees. He did not, however, come within sight of this land. After having sailed nearly west for about ten days, he perceived the promontory of Wardhus, on the coast of Lapland, and soon after doubled the North Cape. By the end of July, being off the coast of Norway, the nights had become dark, so that a light was required in the binnacle, not having been used for two months before.

Hudson would have been glad to pursue his course to Greenland from this point, to attempt the northwest pas-

nal afterwards published in Purchas's *Pilgrims*, except in some slight variations of orthography. It is as follows; "The 14th day, earely in the morning, we discovered land, which land we bare withal, hoising out our boat to descouver what land it might be, but the boat could not come to land, the water was so shoale, where was very much yse also, but there was no similitude of habitation, and this land lyeth from Seynam, E. by N. 160 leagues, being in lat. 72 deg. then we plyed to the northward the 15th, 16th, and 17th day." There is no mention in Willoughby's Journal, published in Purchas's *Pilgrims*, of his having reached a higher northern latitude than 72 degrees; and it is very evident, that Hudson expected to find Willoughby's Land considerably to the south of Spitzbergen.

It may be satisfactory to some of our readers to examine for themselves the Latin passage referred to in this note. We therefore cite it entire.

"Qui Anglicanæ Navigationis cognitionem habent, non ignorant quam iniquis rationibus nitantur, et defendere conentur Angli, Equitem Hugonem Willoughby (Capitaneum trium Navium, vocatarum Bona Esperenza, Eduardus Bona Adventurus, et Bona Confidentia) invenisse et detegisse magnam illam insulam Spitsbergensem, idque septimo anno Regni Eduardi Sexti, anno nimirum Domini 1553. Nam eorum rerum maritimarum ipsæ lucubrationes atque scripta contrarium manifestò testantur, nimirum prædictum Equitem cum tribus istis navibus ex portu Anglicano Ratcliff solvisse (ut Septentrionem versus Regnum Cathaya detegeret) 10 May, 1553, et ab insula Norvegiæ Seynã 30 Julii; eumque duabus navibus, matutino tempore 14 Augusti, terram quandam detegisse sitam à dicta Insula Seynam (Mesocæcias) 160 Anglicanis Leucis (milliaribus Germanicis 120) ad altitudinem 72 graduum. Quod quidem præfatus Eques propriâ manu Anglicè conscripsit his verbis." The writer then quotes the passage in English from Willoughby's Journal, as contained above.

sage; but the season was now so far advanced as to render such a plan impracticable, and he determined to waste no more time and money in an unavailing search; and, therefore, made sail for England, where he arrived on the 26th of August, having been absent about four months.

CHAPTER III.

Hudson's third Voyage.—He seeks Employment from the Dutch East India Company.—Sails from Amsterdam.—Disappointed in the Hope of passing through the Vaygats.—Sails Westward, to the Bank of Newfoundland, and thence to the Coast of America.—Enters Penobscot Bay.—Intercourse with the Natives.—Sails to Cape Cod, and explores the Coast to the Southward.—Returns to the North.—Discovers the Outlet of Hudson's River, and anchors in New York Bay.

THE London Company had become discouraged by two unsuccessful attempts to find a northern passage to China; and Hudson, whose mind was completely bent upon making the discovery, sought employment from the Dutch East India Company. The fame of his adventures had already reached Holland, and he had received from the Dutch the appellations of the bold Englishman, the expert pilot, the famous navigator.* The company were generally in favor of accepting the offer of his services, though the scheme was strongly opposed by Balthazar Moucheron, one of their number, who had some acquaint-

* Yates and Moulton's *History of New York*, Vol. I. p. 201. These writers, in their account of Hudson's third voyage, make frequent references to a history of the same expedition by Lambrechtsen, President of the Zeeland Society of Sciences, who appears to have had access to the records of the Dutch East India Company. A translation of his *Kort Beschryving* was made by Mr. Van der Kemp, and was consulted in manuscript by Yates and Moulton.

ance with the Arctic seas. They accordingly gave him the command of a small vessel, named the *Half Moon*, with a crew of twenty men, Dutch and English, among whom was Robert Juet, who had accompanied him as mate on his second voyage. The Journal of the present voyage, which is published in Purchas's *Pilgrims*, was written by Juet.

He sailed from Amsterdam the 25th of March, 1609, and doubled the North Cape in about a month. His object was to pass through the Vaygats, or perhaps to the north of Nova Zembla, and thus reach China by the northeast passage. But after contending for more than a fortnight with head winds, continual fogs, and ice, and finding it impossible to reach even the coast of Nova Zembla, he determined to abandon this plan, and endeavor to discover a passage by the northwest. He accordingly directed his course westerly, doubled the North Cape again, and in a few days saw a part of the western coast of Norway, in the latitude of sixty-eight degrees. From this point he sailed for the Faroe Islands, where he arrived about the end of May.

Having replenished his water casks at one of these islands, he again hoisted sail, and steered southwest, in the hopes of making Buss Island, which had been discovered by Sir Martin Frobisher, in 1578, as he wished to ascertain if it was correctly laid down on the chart. As he did not succeed in finding it, he continued this course for nearly a month, having much severe weather, and a succession of gales, in one of which the foremast was carried away. Having arrived at the forty-fifth degree of latitude, he judged it best to shape his course westward, with the intention of making Newfoundland. While proceeding in this direction, he one day saw a vessel standing to the eastward, and wishing to speak her, he put the ship about, and gave chase; but finding, as night came on, that he could not overtake her, he resumed the westerly course again.

On the 2d of July, he had soundings on the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, and saw a whole fleet of Frenchmen fishing there. Being on soundings for several

days, he determined to try his luck at fishing; and, the weather falling calm, he set the whole crew at work to so much purpose, that, in the course of the morning, they took between one and two hundred very large cod. After two or three days of calm, the wind sprang up again, and he continued his course westward, till the 12th, when he first had sight of the coast of North America. The fog was so thick, however, that he did not venture nearer the coast for several days; but at length, the weather clearing up, he ran into a bay at the mouth of a large river, in the latitude of forty-four degrees. This was Penobscot Bay, on the coast of Maine.

He already had some notion of the kind of inhabitants he was to find here; for, a few days before, he had been visited by six savages, who came on board in a very friendly manner, and ate and drank with him. He found, that, from their intercourse with the French traders, they had learned a few words of their language. Soon after coming to anchor, he was visited by several of the natives, who appeared very harmless and inoffensive; and, in the afternoon, two boats full of them came to the ship, bringing beaver skins and other fine furs, which they wished to exchange for articles of dress. They offered no violence whatever, though we find in Juet's Journal constant expressions of distrust, apparently without foundation.

They remained in this bay long enough to cut and rig a new foremast; and, being now ready for sea, the men were sent on shore upon an expedition, that disgraced the whole company. What Hudson's sentiments or motives, with regard to this transaction, were, we can only conjecture from a general knowledge of his character, as we have no account of it from himself. But-it seems highly probable, that, if he did not project it, he at least gave his consent to its perpetration. The account is in the words of Juet, as follows. "In the morning, we manned our scute with four muskets and six men, and took one of their shallops and brought it aboard. Then we manned our boat and scute with twelve men and muskets, and two stone pieces, or murderers, and drave the

salvages from their houses, and took the spoil of them, as they would have done of us." After this exploit, they returned to the ship, and set sail immediately. It does not appear from the Journal that the natives had ever offered them any harm, or given any provocation for so wanton an act. The writer only asserts, that they would have done it, if they could. No plea is more commonly used to justify tyranny and cruelty, than the supposed bad intentions of the oppressed.

He now continued southward along the coast of America. It appears that Hudson had been informed by his friend, Captain John Smith, that there was a passage to the western Pacific Ocean south of Virginia, and that, when he had proved the impossibility of going by the northeast, he had offered his crew the choice, either to explore this passage spoken of by Captain Smith, or to seek the northwest passage, by going through Davis's Strait. Many of the men had been in the East India service, and in the habit of sailing in tropical climates, and were consequently very unwilling to endure the severities of a high northern latitude. It was therefore voted, that they should go in search of the passage to the south of Virginia.

In a few days, they saw land extending north, and terminating in a remarkable headland, which he recognised to be Cape Cod. Wishing to double the headland, he sent some of the men in the boat to sound along the shore, before venturing nearer with the ship. The water was five fathoms deep within bowshot of the shore, and, landing, they found, as the Journal informs us, "goodly grapes and rose trees," which they brought on board with them. He then weighed anchor, and advanced as far as the northern extremity of the headland.*

* There is some confusion in that part of the Journal, in which these particulars are related. The northernmost point of Cape Cod is in the latitude of 42 degrees 7 minutes. But the first "headland" described in the Journal was in 41 degrees 45 minutes, which corresponds very nearly with the south end of Chatham Beach. The course thence pursued was to the southeast, and we are told, two days afterwards, of another headland, "that lyeth in 41 degrees 10 minutes." And the journalist adds, "This is that headland, which Captaine Bartholomew

Here he heard the voice of some one calling them; and, thinking it possible some unfortunate European might have been left there, he immediately despatched some of the men to the shore. They found only a few savages; but, as these appeared very friendly, they brought one of them on board, where they gave him refreshments, and also a present of three or four glass buttons, with which he seemed greatly delighted. The savages were observed to have green tobacco, and pipes, the bowls of which were made of clay, and the stems of red copper.

The wind not being favorable for passing west of this headland into the bay, Hudson determined to explore the coast farther south; and the next day he saw the southern point of Cape Cod, which had been discovered and named by Bartholomew Gosnold, in the year 1602. He passed in sight of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, and continued a southerly course till the middle of August, when he arrived at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay. "This," says the writer of the Journal, "is the entrance into the King's river,* in Virginia, where our Englishmen are."† The colony under the command of Newport, consisting of one hundred and five persons,

Gosnold discovered in the yeere 1602, and called *Cape Cod*, because of the store of codfish that he found thereabout." But, if the latitude as here stated be correct, this headland was that of the southwest point of Nantucket.

De Laet's great work on the "New World" was published at Leyden, in the year 1625. He is said to have had in his possession a part of the Journal of this voyage, written by Hudson himself. He tells us, that Hudson first saw the land in latitude 41 degrees 43 minutes, and, supposing it to be an island, called it New Holland; but that he afterwards discovered it to be connected with the continent, and the same as the *White Cape* or *Cape Cod* (promontorium *Blancum*, sive *Cod*.) He moreover adds, that Hudson ascertained this cape to be seventy-five miles further westward from Europe, than the position assigned to it in the charts.—*Novus Orbis*, Lib. III. c. 7. These discrepancies may perhaps be in some degree accounted for by the inaccuracy of the latitudes, or errors of figures in transcribing or printing the Journal; but, after all, it is doubtful what parts of the promontory of Cape Cod were seen by Hudson.

* James River, thus called in honor of King James.

† Purchas's *Pilgrims*. Vol. III. p. 589.

among whom were Smith, Gosnold, Wingfield, and Ratcliffe, had arrived here a little more than two years before; and, if Hudson could have landed, he would have enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing and conversing with his own countrymen, and in his own language, in the midst of the forests of the New World. But the wind was blowing a gale from the northeast, and probably dreading a shore with which he was unacquainted, he made no attempt to find them.

He continued to ply to the south for several days, till he reached the latitude of thirty-five degrees forty-one minutes, when he again changed his course to the north. It is highly probable, that, if the journal of the voyage had been kept by Hudson himself, we should have been informed of his reasons for changing the southerly course at this point. The cause, however, is not difficult to conjecture. He had gone far enough to ascertain, that the information given him by Captain Smith, with respect to a passage into the Pacific south of Virginia, was incorrect; and he probably did not think it worth while to spend more time in so hopeless a search. He therefore retraced his steps; and, on the 28th of August, discovered Delaware Bay, where he examined the currents, soundings, and the appearance of the shores, without attempting to land. From this anchorage, he coasted northwards, the shore appearing low, like sunken ground, dotted with islands, till the 2d of September, when he saw the highlands of Neversink, which, the journalist remarks, "is a very good land to fall with and a pleasant land to see."

The entrance into the southern waters of New York is thus described in the Journal. "At three of the clock in the afternoon, we came to three great rivers. So we stood along to the northernmost, thinking to have gone into it; but we found it to have a very shoal bar before it, for we had but ten foot water. Then we cast about to the southward, and found two fathoms, three fathoms, and three and a quarter, till we came to the southern side of them; then we had five and six fathoms, and anchored. So we sent in our boat to sound, and they found no less water than four, five, six, and seven fathoms,

and returned in an hour and a half. So we weighed and went in, and rode in five fathoms, oozy ground, and saw many salmons, and mullets, and rays very great." The next morning, having ascertained, by sending in the boat, that there was a very good harbor before him, he ran in, and anchored at two cables' length from the shore. This was within Sandy Hook Bay.

He was very soon visited by the natives, who came on board his vessel, and seemed to be greatly rejoiced at his arrival among them. They brought green tobacco, which they desired to exchange for knives and beads; and Hudson observed, that they had copper pipes, and ornaments of copper. They also appeared to have plenty of maize, from which they made good bread. Their dress was of deerskins, well cured, and hanging loosely about them. There is a tradition, that some of his men, being sent out to fish, landed on Coney Island. They found the soil sandy, but supporting a vast number of plum trees loaded with fruit, and grape vines growing round them.*

The next day, the men, being sent in the boat to explore the bay still further, landed, probably on the Jersey Shore, where they were very kindly received by the savages, who gave them plenty of tobacco. They found the land covered with large oaks. Several of the natives also came on board, dressed in mantles of feathers and fine furs. Among the presents they brought, were dried currants, which were found extremely palatable.

Soon afterwards, five of the men were sent in the boat to examine the north side of the bay, and sound the river, which was perceived at the distance of four leagues. They passed through the Narrows, sounding all along, and saw "a narrow river to the westward, between two islands;" supposed to be Staten Island and Bergen Neck. They described the land as covered with trees, grass, and flowers, and filled with delightful fragrance. On their return to the ship, they were assaulted by two canoes, one containing twelve, and the other fourteen savages.

* Yates and Moulton's *History of New York*, Vol. I. p. 210. .

It was nearly dark, and the rain which was falling had extinguished their match, so that they could only trust to their oars for escape. One of the men, John Colman, who had accompanied Hudson on his first voyage, was killed by an arrow shot into his throat, and two more were wounded. The darkness probably saved them from the savages, but at the same time it prevented their finding the vessel; so that they did not return till the next day, when they appeared bringing the body of their comrade. Hudson ordered him to be carried on shore and buried, and named the place, in memory of the event, Colman's Point.*

He now expected an attack from the natives, and accordingly hoisted in the boat, and erected a sort of bulwark along the sides of the vessel, for the better defence. But these precautions were needless. Several of the natives came on board, but in a friendly manner, wishing to exchange tobacco and Indian corn for the trifles which the sailors could spare them. They did not appear to know any thing of the affray which had taken place. But, the day after, two large canoes came off to the vessel, the one filled with armed men, the other under the pretence of trading. Hudson, however, would only allow two of the savages to come on board, keeping the rest at a distance. The two who came on board were detained, and Hudson dressed them up in red coats; the remainder returned to the shore. Presently another canoe, with two men in it, came to the vessel. Hudson also detained one of these, probably wishing to keep him as a hostage; but he very soon jumped overboard, and swam to the shore. On the 11th, Hudson sailed through the Narrows, and anchored in New York Bay.

* Probably the point since known as Sandy Hook.

CHAPTER IV.

*Hudson explores the River which now bears his Name.
—Escape of the Hostages.—Strange Experiment with
the Natives.—Anchors near the present Site of Albany.
—Returns down the River.—Battle with the Natives,
near Hoboken.—Sails from the Bay, and leaves Amer-
ica.—Arrives in England.*

HUDSON now prepared to explore the magnificent river, which came rolling its waters into the sea from unknown regions. Whither he would be conducted in tracing its course, he could form no conjecture. A hope may be supposed to have entered his mind, that the long desired passage to the Indies was now at length discovered; that here was to be the end of his toils; that here, in this mild climate, and amidst these pleasant scenes, was to be found that object, which he had sought in vain through the snows and ice of the Arctic zone. With a glad heart, then, he weighed anchor, on the 12th of September, and commenced his memorable voyage up that majestic stream, which now bears his name.

The wind only allowed him to advance a few miles the first two days of the voyage; but the time, which he was obliged to spend at anchor, was fully occupied in trading with the natives, who came off from the shore in great numbers, bringing oysters and vegetables. He observed that they had copper pipes, and earthen vessels to cook their meat in. They seemed very harmless and well disposed; but the crew were unwilling to trust these appearances, and would not allow any of them to come on board. The next day, a fine breeze springing up from the southeast, he was able to make great progress, so that he anchored at night nearly forty miles from the place of starting in the morning. He observes, that "here the land grew very high and mountainous," so that he had

undoubtedly anchored in the midst of the fine scenery of the Highlands.

When he awoke in the morning, he found a heavy mist overhanging the river and its shores, and concealing the summits of the mountains. But it was dispelled by the sun in a short time; and, taking advantage of a fair wind, he weighed anchor, and continued the voyage. A little circumstance occurred this morning, which was destined to be afterwards painfully remembered. The two savages, whom he held as hostages, made their escape through the portholes of the vessel, and swam to the shore; and, as soon as the ship was under sail, they took pains to express their indignation at the treatment they had received, by uttering loud and angry cries. Towards night, he came to other mountains, which, he says, "lie from the river's side," and anchored, it is supposed, near the present site of Catskill Landing. "There," says the Journal, "we found very loving people, and very old men, where we were well used. Our boat went to fish, and caught great store of very good fish."*

The next morning, September 16th, the men were sent again to catch fish, but were not so successful as they had been the day before, in consequence of the savages having been there in their canoes all night. A large number of the natives came off to the ship, bringing Indian corn, pumpkins, and tobacco. The day was consumed in trading with the natives, and in filling the casks with fresh water; so that they did not weigh anchor till towards night. After sailing about five miles, finding the water shoal, they came to anchor, probably near the spot where the city of Hudson now stands. The weather was hot, and Hudson determined to set his men at work in the cool of the morning. He accordingly, on the 17th, weighed anchor at dawn, and ran up the river about fifteen miles; when, finding shoals and small islands, he thought it best to anchor again. Towards night, the vessel, having drifted near the shore, grounded in shoal water, but was easily drawn off, by carrying out the

* Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 593.

small anchor. She was aground again, in a short time, in the channel, but, the tide rising, she floated off.

The two days following, he advanced only about five miles, being much occupied by his intercourse with the natives. Being in the neighborhood of the present town of Castleton, he went on shore, where he was very kindly received by an old savage, "the governor of the country," who took him to his house, and gave him the best cheer he could. At his anchorage, also, five miles above this place, the natives came flocking on board, bringing a great variety of articles, such as grapes, pumpkins, beaver and otter skins, which they exchanged for beads, knives and hatchets, or whatever trifles the sailors could spare them. The next day was occupied in exploring the river; four men being sent in the boat, under the command of the mate, for that purpose. They ascended several miles, and found the channel narrow, and in some places only two fathoms deep, but, after that, seven or eight fathoms. In the afternoon, they returned to the ship. Hudson resolved to pursue the examination of the channel on the following morning, but was interrupted by the number of natives who came on board. Finding that he was not likely to gain any progress this day, he sent the carpenter ashore to prepare a new foreyard; and, in the mean time, prepared to make an extraordinary experiment on board.

From the whole tenor of the Journal, it is evident, that great distrust was entertained by Hudson and his men towards the natives. He now determined to ascertain, by intoxicating some of the chiefs, and thus throwing them off their guard, whether they were plotting any treachery. He accordingly invited several of them into the cabin, and gave them plenty of brandy to drink. One of these men had his wife with him, who, the Journal informs us, "sate so modestly as any one of our countrywomen would do in a strange place;" but the men had less delicacy, and were soon quite merry with the brandy. One of them, who had been on board from the first arrival of the ship, was completely intoxicated, and fell sound asleep, to the great astonishment of his companions, who

probably feared that he had been poisoned; for they all took to their canoes and made for the shore, leaving their unlucky comrade on board. Their anxiety for his welfare, however, soon induced them to return; and they brought a quantity of beads, which they gave him, perhaps to enable him to purchase his freedom from the spell that had been laid upon him.

The poor savage slept quietly all night, and, when his friends came to visit him the next morning, they found him quite well. This restored their confidence, so that they came to the ship again in crowds, in the afternoon, bringing various presents for Hudson. Their visit, which was one of unusual ceremony, is thus described in the *Journal*. "So, at three of the clock in the afternoon, they came aboard, and brought tobacco and more beads, and gave them to our master, and made an oration, and showed him all the country round about. Then they sent one of their company on land, who presently returned, and brought a great platter full of venison, dressed by themselves, and they caused him to eat with them. Then they made him reverence, and departed, all save the old man that lay aboard."*

At night the mate returned in the boat, having been sent again to explore the river. He reported, that he had ascended eight or nine leagues, and found but seven feet of water, and irregular soundings.

It was evidently useless to attempt to ascend the river any further with the ship, and Hudson therefore determined to return. We may well imagine, that he was satisfied already with the result of the voyage, even supposing him to have been disappointed in not finding here a passage to the Indies. He had explored a great navigable river to the distance of nearly a hundred and forty miles; he had found the country along the banks extremely fertile, the climate delightful, and the scenery displaying every variety of beauty and grandeur; and he knew that he had opened the way for his patrons to possessions, which might prove of inestimable value.

* Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 594.

It is supposed, that the highest place which the *Half Moon* reached in the river, was the neighborhood of the present site of Albany; and that the boats, being sent out to explore, ascended as high as Waterford, and probably some distance beyond. The voyage down the river was not more expeditious than it had been in ascending; the prevalent winds were southerly, and for several days the ship could advance but very slowly. The time, however, passed agreeably, in making excursions on the shore; where they found "good ground for corn and other garden herbs, with a great store of goodly oaks, and walnut trees, and chestnut trees, ewe trees, and trees of sweet wood in great abundance, and great store of slate for houses, and other good stones;" or in receiving visits from the natives, who came off to the ship in numbers. While Hudson was at anchor near the spot where the city bearing his name now stands, two canoes came from the place where the scene of the intoxication had occurred, and in one of them was the old man, who had been the sufferer under the strange experiment. He brought another old man with him, who presented Hudson with a string of beads, and "showed all the country there about, as though it were at his command." Hudson entertained them at dinner, with four of their women, and in the afternoon dismissed them with presents.

He continued the voyage down the river, taking advantage of wind and tide as he could, and employing the time, when at anchor, in fishing or in trading with the natives, who came to the ship nearly every day, till, on the 1st of October, he anchored near Stony Point.

The vessel was no sooner perceived from the shore to be stationary, than a party of the native mountaineers came off in their canoes to visit it, and were filled with wonder at every thing it contained. While the attention of the crew was taken up with their visitors upon deck, one of the savages managed to run his canoe under the stern, and, climbing up the rudder, found his way into the cabin by the window; where, having seized a pillow and a few articles of wearing apparel, he made off with them in the canoe. The mate detected him as he fled,

fired at, and killed him. Upon this, all the other savages departed with the utmost precipitation ; some taking to their canoes, and others plunging into the water. The boat was manned and sent after the stolen goods, which were easily recovered ; but, as the men were returning to the vessel, one of the savages who were in the water, seized hold of the keel of the boat, with the intention, as was supposed, of upsetting it. The cook took a sword and lopped his hand off, and the poor wretch immediately sunk. They then weighed anchor and advanced about five miles.

The next day, Hudson descended about seven leagues, and anchored. Here he was visited in a canoe by one of the two savages, who had escaped from the ship as he was going up. But fearing treachery, he would not allow him or his companions to come on board. Two canoes, filled with armed warriors, then came under the stern, and commenced an attack with arrows. The men fired at them with their muskets, and killed three of them. More than a hundred savages now came down upon the nearest point of land, to shoot at the vessel. One of the cannon was brought to bear upon these warriors, and, at the first discharge, two of them were killed, and the rest fled to the woods.

The savages were not yet discouraged. They had, doubtless, been instigated to make this attack by the two, who escaped near West Point, and who had probably incited their countrymen by the story of their imprisonment, as well as by representing to them the value of the spoil, if they could capture the vessel, and the small number of men who guarded it. Nine or ten of the boldest warriors now threw themselves into a canoe, and put off towards the ship ; but a shot from the cannon made a hole in the canoe, and killed one of the men. This was followed by a discharge of musketry, which destroyed three or four more. This put an end to the battle ; and in the evening, having descended about five miles, Hudson anchored in a part of the river out of the reach of his enemies, probably near Hoboken.

Hudson had now explored the bay of New York, and

the noble stream which pours into it from the north. For his employers he had secured possessions, which would beyond measure reward them for the expense they had incurred in fitting out the expedition. For himself, he had gained a name, that was destined to live in the gratitude of a great nation, through unnumbered generations. Happy in the result of his labors, and in the brilliant promise they afforded, he spread his sails again for the Old World, on the 4th of October, and, in little more than a month, arrived safely at Dartmouth, in England.

The Journal kept by Juet ends abruptly at this place. The question, therefore, immediately arises, whether Hudson pursued his voyage to Holland, or whether he remained in England, and sent the vessel home. Several Dutch authors assert, that Hudson was not allowed, after reaching England, to pursue his voyage to Amsterdam; and this seems highly probable, when we remember the wellknown jealousy with which the maritime enterprises of the Dutch were regarded by King James.

Whether Hudson went to Holland himself, or not, it seems clear from various circumstances, that he secured to the Dutch Company all the benefits of his discoveries, by sending to them his papers and charts. It is worthy of note, that the earliest histories of this voyage, with the exception of Juet's Journal, were published by Dutch authors. Moreover, as we have already seen, Hudson's own Journal, or some portion of it at least, was in Holland, and was used by De Laet previously to the publication of Juet's Journal in Purchas's *Pilgrims*. But the most substantial proof, that the Dutch enjoyed the benefit of his discoveries earlier than any other nation, is the fact, that the very next year they were trading in Hudson's River; which it is not probable would have happened, if they had not had possession of Hudson's charts and Journal.

CHAPTER V.

Hudson's fourth Voyage.—He engages in the Service of the London Company.—Sails to Iceland.—Disturbances among his Crew.—Advances westward.—In great Danger from the Ice.—Enters and explores Hudson's Bay.—Unsuccessful in the Search for a Western Passage.—Determines to winter in the Bay.

THE success of Hudson's last voyage probably stimulated the London Company to take him again into their employment, and to fit out another vessel in search of that great object of discovery, the northwest passage. We find him setting out on a voyage, under their auspices, early in the spring of 1610. His crew numbered several persons, who were destined to act a conspicuous part in the melancholy events of this expedition. Among these were Robert Juet, who had already sailed with him as mate in two of his voyages; Habakuk Prickett, a man of some intelligence and education, who had been in the service of Sir Dudley Digges, one of the London Company, and from whose Journal we learn chiefly the events of the voyage; and Henry Greene, of whose character and circumstances it is necessary here to give a brief account.

It appears from the Journal, that Greene was a young man of good abilities and education, born of highly respectable parents, but of such abandoned character, that he had forced his family to cast him off. Hudson found him in this condition, took pity upon him, and received him into his house in London. When it was determined, that he should command this expedition, Hudson resolved to take Greene with him, in the hope, that, by exciting his ambition, and by withdrawing him from his accustomed haunts, he might reclaim him. Greene was also a good penman, and would be useful to Hudson in

that capacity. With much difficulty, Greene's mother was persuaded to advance four pounds, to buy clothes for him; and, at last, the money was placed in the hands of an agent, for fear that it would be wasted if given directly to him. He was not registered in the Company's books, nor did he sail in their pay; but Hudson, to stimulate him to reform, promised to give him wages, and on his return to get him appointed one of the Prince's guards, provided he should behave well on the voyage.

Hudson was also accompanied, as usual, by his son. The crew consisted of twenty-three men; and the vessel was named the *Discovery*. The London Company had insisted upon Hudson's taking in the ship a person, who was to aid him by his knowledge and experience, and in whom they felt great confidence. This arrangement seems to have been very disagreeable to Hudson, as he put the man into another vessel before he reached the mouth of the Thames, and sent him back to London, with a letter to his employers stating his reasons for so doing. What these reasons were, we can form no conjecture, as there is no hint given in the Journal.

He sailed from London, on the 17th of April, 1610. Steering north from the mouth of the Thames, and passing in sight of the northern part of Scotland, the Orkney, Shetland, and Faroe Isles, and having, in a little more than a month, sailed along the southern coast of Iceland, where he could see the flames ascending from Mount Hecla, he anchored in a bay on the western side of that island. Here they found a spring so hot, that "it would scald a fowl," in which the crew bathed freely. At this place, Hudson discovered signs of a turbulent and mutinous disposition in his crew. The chief plotter seems to have been Robert Juet, the mate. Before reaching Iceland, Juet had remarked to one of the crew, that there would be bloodshed before the voyage was over; and he was evidently at that time contriving some mischief.* While the ship was at anchor in this bay, a circumstance occurred, which gave Juet an opportunity

* Wydhhouse's note; Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 609.

to commence his intrigues. It is thus narrated by Pricket.

“ At Iceland, the surgeon and he [Henry Greene] fell out in Dutch, and he beat him ashore in English, which set all the company in a rage, so that we had much ado to get the surgeon aboard. I told the master of it, but he bade me let it alone; for, said he, the surgeon had a tongue that would wrong the best friend he had. But Robert Juet, the master's mate, would needs burn his finger in the embers, and told the carpenter a long tale, when he was drunk, that our master had brought in Greene to crack his credit that should displease him; which words came to the master's ears, who, when he understood it, would have gone back to Iceland, when he was forty leagues from thence, to have sent home his mate, Robert Juet, in a fisherman. But, being otherwise persuaded, all was well. So Henry Greene stood upright, and very inward with the master, and was a serviceable man every way for manhood; but for religion, he would say, he was clean paper, whereon he might write what he would.”*

He sailed from Iceland on the 1st of June, and for several days Juet continued to instigate the crew to mutiny, persuading them to put the ship about and return to England.† This, as we have seen, came to the knowledge of Hudson, and he threatened to send Juet back, but was finally pacified. In a few days, he made the coast of Greenland, which appeared very mountainous, the hills rising like sugar loaves, and covered with snow. But the ice was so thick all along the shore, that it was found impossible to land. He therefore steered for the south of Greenland, where he encountered great numbers of whales. Two of these monsters passed under the ship, but did no harm; for which the journalist was devoutly thankful. Having doubled the southern point of Greenland, he steered northwest, passed in sight of Desolation Island, in the neighborhood of which he

* Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 601.

† Wydhouse's note; Purchas's *Pilgrims*, Vol. III. p. 609.

saw a huge island or mountain of ice, and continued northwest till the latter part of June, when he came in sight of land bearing north, which he supposed to be an island set down in his chart in the northerly part of Davis's Strait. His wish was to sail along the western coast of this island, and thus get to the north of it; but adverse winds and the quantities of ice, which he encountered every day, prevented him.

Being south of this land, he fell into a current setting westwardly, which he followed, but was in constant danger from the ice. One day, an enormous mountain of ice turned over near the ship, but fortunately without touching it. This served as a warning to keep at a distance from these masses, to prevent the ship from being crushed by them. He encountered a severe storm, which brought the ice so thick about the ship, that he judged it best to run her among the largest masses, and there let her lie. "In this situation," says the journalist, "some of our men fell sick; I will not say it was of fear, although I saw small sign of other grief." As soon as the storm abated, Hudson endeavored to extricate himself from the ice. Wherever any open space appeared, he directed his course, sailing in almost every direction; but the longer he contended with the ice, the more completely did he seem to be enclosed, till at last he could go no further. The ship seemed to be hemmed in on every side, and in danger of being soon closely wedged, so as to be immovable. In this perilous situation, even the stout heart of Hudson almost yielded to the feeling of despair; and, as he afterwards confessed to one of the men, he thought he should never escape from the ice, but that he was doomed to perish there.

He did not, however, allow his crew, at the time, to be aware what his apprehensions really were; but, assembling them all around him, he brought out his chart, and showed them that they had advanced in this direction a hundred leagues further than any Englishman had done before; and gave them their choice whether to proceed, or to return home. The men could come to no agreement; some were in favor of returning, others were for

pushing forward. This was probably what Hudson expected; the men were mutinous, and yet knew not what they wanted themselves. Having fairly convinced them of this, it was easier to set them at work to extricate the ship from her immediate danger. After much time and labor, they made room to turn the ship round, and then by little and little they worked their way along for a league or two, when they found a clear sea.

The scene which has just been described, seems indeed a subject worthy of the talents of a skilful painter. The fancy of the artist would represent the dreary and frightful appearance of the ice-covered sea, stretching away as far as the eye could reach, a bleak and boundless waste; the dark and broken clouds driving across the fitful sky; the ship motionless amidst the islands and mountains of ice, her shrouds and sails being fringed and stiffened with the frozen spray. On the deck would appear the form of Hudson himself, displaying the chart to his men; his countenance care-worn and sad, but still concealing, under the appearance of calmness and indifference, the apprehensions and forebodings, which harrowed his mind. About him would be seen the rude and ruffian-like men; some examining the chart with eager curiosity, some glaring on their commander with eyes of hatred and vengeance, and expressing in their looks those murderous intentions, which they at last so fatally executed.

Having reached a clear sea, Hudson pursued his course northwest, and in a short time saw land bearing southwest, which appeared very mountainous and covered with snow. This he named *Desire Provokes*. He had now entered the strait which bears his name, and, steering west, he occupied nearly the whole month of July in passing through it. To the various capes, islands, and promontories, which he saw, he gave names, either in commemoration of some circumstance which happened at the time, or in honor of persons and places at home, or else for the reward of the discoverer.

Some islands, near which he anchored, and where his ship was but just saved from the rocks, he called the *Isles of God's Mercies*. On the 19th, he passed a point

of land, which he named *Hold with Hope*. To the main land, which he soon after discovered, he gave the name of *Magna Britannia*. On the 2d of September, he saw a headland on the northern shore, which he named *Salisbury's Foreland*; and, running southwest from this point about fourteen leagues, he entered a passage not more than five miles in width, the southern cape at the entrance of which he named *Cape Worsenholme*, and that on the north side, *Cape Digges*.

He now hoped, that the passage to the western sea was open before him, and that the great discovery was at length achieved. He therefore sent a number of the men on shore at Cape Digges, to ascend the hills, in the hope that they would see the great ocean open to them beyond the strait. The exploring party, however, were prevented from making any discovery, by a violent thunder storm, which soon drove them back to the ship. They saw plenty of deer, and soon after espied a number of small piles of stones, which they at first supposed must be the work of some civilized person. On approaching them, and lifting up one of the stones, they found them to be hollow, and filled with fowls, hung by the neck. They endeavored to persuade their commander to wait here, till they could provision the ship from the stores, which were thus remarkably provided for them. But his ardor was so great to find his way into the ocean, which he felt convinced was immediately in the vicinity, that he could suffer no delay, but ordered his men to weigh anchor at once; a precipitancy which he had afterwards reason bitterly to regret. Having advanced about ten leagues through the strait, he came into the great open bay or sea which bears his name.

Having entered the bay, he pursued a southerly course for nearly a month, till he arrived at the bottom of the bay; when, finding that he was disappointed in his expectation of thus reaching the western seas, he changed his course to the north, in order to retrace his steps. On the 10th of September, he found it necessary to inquire into the conduct of some of the men, whose mutinous disposition had manifested itself a good deal of late. Upon

investigation, it appeared, that the mate, Robert Juet, and Francis Clement, the boatswain, had been the most forward in exciting a spirit of insubordination. The conduct of Juet at Iceland was again brought up, and, as it appeared that both he and Clement had been lately plotting against the commander, they were both deposed, and Robert Billet was appointed mate, and William Wilson, boatswain.

The remaining part of September and all October were passed in exploring the great bay. At times the weather was so bad, that they were compelled to run into some bay and anchor; and in one of the storms they were obliged to cut away the cable, and so lost their anchor. At another time, they ran upon a sunken ledge of rocks, where the ship stuck fast for twelve hours, but was at last got off without being much injured. The last of October having now arrived, and winter beginning to set in, Hudson ran the vessel into a small bay, and sent a party in search of a good place to intrench themselves till the spring. They soon found a convenient station; and, bringing the ship thither, they hauled her aground. This was on the 1st of November. In ten days they were completely frozen in, and the ship firmly fixed in the ice.

CHAPTER VI.

Dreary Prospect for the Winter.—Disturbances and sufferings of the Crew.—Unexpected Supply of Provisions.—Distress from Famine.—Hudson sails from his Wintering-Place.—Mutiny of Green and Others.—Fate of Hudson and Eight of the Crew.—Fate of Green and Others of the Mutineers.—Return of the Vessel to England.

THE prospect for Hudson and his men was now dreary and disheartening. In addition to the rigors of a

long winter, in a high northern latitude, they had to apprehend the suffering, which would arise from a scarcity of provisions. The vessel had been victualled for six months, and that time having now expired, and their stores fallen short, while, at the same time, the chance of obtaining supplies from hunting and fishing was very precarious, it was found necessary to put the crew upon an allowance. In order, however, to stimulate the men to greater exertions, Hudson offered a reward or bounty for every beast, fish, or fowl, which they should kill; hoping, that in this way the scanty stock of provisions might be made to hold out till the breaking up of the ice in the spring.

About the middle of November, John Williams, the gunner, died. We are not informed what was his disease, but we are led to suppose from the Journal, that his death was hastened, if not caused, by the unkind treatment he experienced from Hudson. It appears very evident from the simple narration by Pricket, that "the master," as he calls him, had become hasty and irritable in his temper. This is more to be regretted, than wondered at. The continual hardships and disappointments, to which he had been exposed, and especially the last unhappy failure in discovering the northwest passage, when he had believed himself actually within sight of it, must have operated powerfully upon an ardent and enthusiastic mind like his, in which the feeling of regret at failure is always proportionate to the strength and confidence of hope when first formed. In addition to this, the troublesome disposition of the crew, which must have caused ceaseless anxiety, undoubtedly contributed much to disturb his calmness and self-possession, and render him precipitate and irritable in his conduct. Many proofs of this soon occurred.

The death of the gunner was followed by consequences, which may be regarded as the beginning of troubles, that in the end proved fatal. It appears, that it was the custom in those times, when a man died at sea, to sell his clothes to the crew by auction. In one respect, Hudson violated this custom, and probably gained no lit-

de ill' will thereby. The gunner had a gray cloth gown or wrapper, which Henry Greene had set his heart upon possessing; and Hudson, wishing to gratify his favorite, refused to put it up to public sale, but gave Greene the sole choice of purchasing it.

Not long after this, Hudson ordered the carpenter to go on shore, and build a house, or hut, for the accommodation of the crew. The man replied, that it would now be impossible to do such a piece of work, from the severity of the weather, and the quantity of snow. The house ought to have been erected when they had first fixed their station there, but now it was too late, and Hudson had refused to have it done at first. The carpenter's refusal to perform the work excited the anger of the master to such a degree, that he drove him violently from the cabin, using the most opprobrious language, and finally threatening to hang him.

Greene appeared to take sides with the carpenter, which made Hudson so angry, that he gave the gown, which Greene had coveted so much, to Billet, the mate; telling Greene, with much abusive language, that, as not one of his friends at home would trust him to the value of twenty shillings, he could not be expected to trust him for the value of the gown; and that, as for wages, he should have none if he did not behave better. These bitter taunts sunk deep into Greene's heart, and no doubt incited him to further mutinous conduct.

The sufferings of the men were not less, during the winter, than they had had reason to apprehend. Many of them were made lame, probably from chilblains and freezing their feet; and Pricket complains in his Journal, written after the close of the voyage, that he was still suffering from the effects of this winter. They were, however, much better supplied with provisions than they had anticipated. For three months, they had such an abundance of white partridges about the ship, that they killed a hundred dozen of them; and, on the departure of these, when spring came, they found a great plenty of swans, geese, ducks, and other waterfowl.

Hudson was in hopes, when he saw these wild fowl,

that they had come to breed in these regions, which would have rendered it much easier to catch them ; but he found that they went still further north for this purpose. Before the ice had broken up, these birds too had disappeared, and the horror of starvation began to stare them in the face. They were forced to search the hills, woods, and valleys, for any thing that might afford them subsistence ; even the moss growing on the ground, and disgusting reptiles, were not spared. Their sufferings were somewhat relieved, at last, by the use of a bud, which is described as " full of turpentine matter."* Of these buds, the surgeon made a decoction, which he gave the men to drink, and also applied them hot to their bodies, wherever any part was affected. This was, undoubtedly, very effectual in curing the scurvy.

About the time that the ice began to break up, they were visited by a savage, whom Hudson treated so well, that he returned the day after to the ship, bringing several skins, some of which he gave in return for presents he had received the day before. For others, Hudson traded with him, but made such hard bargains, that he never visited them again. As soon as the ice would allow of it, some of the men were sent out to fish. The first day, they were very successful, catching about five hundred fish ; but after this, they never succeeded in taking a quarter part of this number in one day. Being greatly distressed, by want of provisions, Hudson took the boat and coasted along the bay to the southwest, in the hope of meeting some of the natives, from whom he might obtain supplies. He saw the woods blazing at a distance, where they had been set on fire by the natives ; but he was not able at any time to come within sight of the people themselves. After an absence of several days, he returned, unsuccessful, to the ship.

The only effect of this little expedition was defeating a conspiracy, formed by Greene, Wilson, and some others, to seize the boat and make off with her. They were prevented from putting this scheme in execution by Hud-

* Probably the bud of the Tacamahaca tree, the *Populus balsamifera* of Linnaeus.

son's unexpected determination to use the boat himself. Well would it have been for him, if they had been allowed to follow their wishes.

Having returned to the ship, and finding every thing now prepared for their departure according to his directions, before weighing anchor he went through the mournful task of distributing to his crew the small remnant of the provisions, about a pound of bread to each man; which he did with tears in his eyes. He also gave them a bill of return, as a sort of certificate for any who might live to reach home. Some of the men were so ravenous, that they devoured in a day or two the whole of their allowance of bread.

They sailed from the bay, in which they had passed the winter, about the middle of June, and, in three or four days, being surrounded with ice, were obliged to anchor. The bread he had given the men, and a few pounds of cheese which had remained, were consumed. Hudson now intimated to one of the crew, that the chests of all the men would be searched, to find any provisions that might have been concealed there; and ordered him at the same time to bring all that was in his. The man obeyed, and produced thirty cakes in a bag. This indiscretion on the part of Hudson appears to have greatly exasperated his crew, and to have been the immediate cause of open mutiny.

They had been detained at anchor in the ice about a week, when the first signs of this mutiny appeared. Greene, and Wilson, the boatswain, came in the night to Pricket, who was lying in his berth very lame, and told him, that they and several of the crew had resolved to seize Hudson, and set him adrift in the boat, with all on board who were disabled by sickness; that there were but few days' provisions left, and the master appeared entirely irresolute which way to go; that for themselves they had eaten nothing for three days; their only hope, therefore, was in taking command of the ship, and escaping from these regions as quickly as possible; and that they would carry their plot into execution, or perish in the attempt.

Pricket remonstrated with them in the most earnest manner, entreating them to abandon such a wicked intention, and reminding them of their wives and children, from whom they would be banished for ever, if they stained themselves with so great a crime. But all he could say had no effect. He then besought them to delay the execution for three days, for two days, for only twelve hours; but they sternly refused. Pricket then told them, that it was not their safety for which they were anxious, but that they were bent upon shedding blood and revenging themselves, which made them so hasty. Upon this, Greene took up the bible which lay there, and swore upon it, that he would do no man harm, and that what he did was for the good of the voyage, and for nothing else. Wilson took the same oath, and after him came Juet and the other conspirators separately, and swore in the same words. The words of the oath are recorded by Pricket, because, after his return to England, he was much blamed for administering any oath, as he seemed by so doing to side with the mutineers. The oath, as administered by him, ran as follows:

“You shall swear truth to God, your Prince, and Country; you shall do nothing but to the glory of God and the good of the action in hand, and harm to no man.” How little regard was paid to this oath by the mutineers, will shortly appear.

It was decided, that the plot should be put in execution at daylight; and, in the mean time, Greene went into Hudson's cabin to keep him company, and prevent his suspicions from being excited. They had determined to put the carpenter and John King into the boat with Hudson and the sick, having some grudge against them for their attachment to the master. King and the carpenter had slept upon deck this night. But about day-break, King was observed to go down into the hold with the cook, who was going for water. Some of the mutineers ran and shut down the hatch over them, while Greene and another engaged the attention of the carpenter, so that he did not observe what was going on.

Hudson now came up from the cabin, and was imme-

diately seized by Thomas, and Bennet, the cook, who had come up from the hold, while Wilson ran behind and bound his arms. He asked them what they meant, and they told him he would know when he was in the shallop. Hudson called on the carpenter to help him, telling him that he was bound; but he could render him no assistance, being surrounded by mutineers. In the mean time, Juet had gone down into the hold, where King was; but the latter, having armed himself with a sword, attacked Juet, and would have killed him, if the noise had not been heard upon deck by the conspirators, some of whom ran down and overpowered him. While this was done, two of the sick men, Lodlo and Bute, boldly reproached their shipmates for their wickedness, telling them that their knavery would show itself, and that their actions were prompted by mere vengeance, not the wish to preserve their lives. But their words had no effect.

The boat was now hauled alongside, and the sick and lame were called up from their berths. Pricket crawled upon deck as well as he could, and Hudson, seeing him, called to him to come to the hatchway to speak with him. Pricket entreated the men, on his knees, for the love of God, to remember their duty, and do as they would be done by; but they only told him to go back to his berth, and would not allow him to have any communication with Hudson. When Hudson was in the boat, he called again to Pricket, who was at the horn window, which lighted his cabin, and told him that Juet would "overthrow" them all. "Nay," said Pricket, "it is that villain, Henry Greene;" and this he said as loud as he could.

After Hudson was put into the boat, the carpenter was set at liberty, but he refused to remain in the ship unless they forced him; so they told him he might go in the boat, and allowed him to take his chest with him. Before he got into the boat, he went down to take leave of Pricket, who entreated him to remain in the ship; but the carpenter said he believed that they would soon be taken on board again, as there was no one left who knew enough to bring the ship home; and that he was deter-

mined not to desert the master. He thought the boat would be kept in tow; but, if they should be parted, he begged Pricket to leave some token for them if he should reach Digges's Cape first. They then took leave of each other with tears in their eyes, and the carpenter went into the boat, taking a musket and some powder and shot, an iron pot, a small quantity of meal, and other provisions. Hudson's son and six of the men were also put into the boat. The sails were now hoisted, and they stood eastward with a fair wind, dragging the shallop from the stern; and in a few hours, being clear of the ice, they cut the rope by which the boat was dragged, and soon after lost sight of her for ever.

The account here given of the mutiny, is nearly in the words of Pricket, an eyewitness of the event. It is difficult at first to perceive the whole enormity of the crime. The more we reflect upon it, the blacker it appears. Scarcely a circumstance is wanting, that could add to the baseness of the villany, or the horror of the suffering inflicted. The principal conspirators were men, who were bound to Hudson by long friendship, by lasting obligations, and by common interests, adventures, and sufferings. Juet had sailed with him on two of his former voyages, and had shared in the glory of his discoveries. Greene had been received into his house, when abandoned even by his own mother; had been kindly and hospitably entertained, encouraged to reform, and taken; on Hudson's private responsibility, into a service in which he might gain celebrity and wealth. Wilson had been selected from among the crew, by the approving eye of the commander, and appointed to a place of trust and honor. Yet these men conspired to murder their benefactor, and instigated the crew to join in their execrable scheme.

Not contented with the destruction of their commander, that nothing might be wanting to fill up the measure of their wickedness, they formed the horrible plan of destroying, at the same time, all of their companions, whom sickness and suffering had rendered a helpless and unresisting prey to their cruelty. The manner of effecting

this massacre was worthy of the authors of such a plot. To have killed their unhappy victims outright would have been comparatively merciful; but a long, lingering, and painful death was chosen for them. The imagination turns with intense and fearful interest to the scene. The form of the commander is before us, bound hand and foot, condescending to no supplication to the mutineers, but calling in vain for assistance from those, who would gladly have helped him, but who were overpowered by numbers, or disabled by sickness. The cry of the suffering and dying rings in our ears, as they are dragged from their beds, to be exposed to the inclemencies of the ice-covered sea in an open boat. Among them appears the young son of Hudson, whose tender years can wake no compassion in the cold-blooded murderers.

We refrain from following them, even in fancy, through their sufferings after they are separated from the ship; their days and nights of agony, their cry of distress, and the frenzy of starvation, their hopes of relief defeated, their despair, and their raving as death comes on. Over these awful scenes, the hand of God has hung a veil, which hides them from us for ever. Let us not seek to penetrate, even in imagination, the terrors which it conceals.

How far Pricket's account, in regard to the course pursued by Hudson, is worthy of confidence, must be left to conjecture. It should be remembered, however, that Pricket was not free from the suspicion of having been in some degree implicated in the conspiracy, and that his narrative was designed in part as a vindication of himself. The indiscreet severity charged upon Hudson, and the hasty temper he is represented to have shown, in embroiling himself with his men, for apparently trifling reasons, are not consistent with the moderation, good sense, and equanimity, with which his conduct had been marked in all his preceding voyages. It is moreover hardly credible, that, knowing as he did, the mutinous spirit of some of the crew, he should so rashly inflame this spirit, at a time when he was surrounded by imminent dangers, and when his safety depended on the

united support of all the men under his command. Hence, whatever reliance may be placed on the veracity of Pricket, it is due to the memory of Hudson not to overlook the circumstances, by which his pen may have been biased.

When Hudson and the men were deposited in the boat, the mutineers busied themselves with breaking open chests and pillaging the ship. They found in the cabin a considerable quantity of biscuit, and a butt of beer; and there were a few pieces of pork, some meal, and a half bushel of pease in the hold. These supplies were enough to save them from immediate starvation; and they expected to find plenty of game at Digges's Cape.

Henry Greene was appointed commander, though evidently too ignorant for the place. It was a full month before they could find their way to the strait, which leads out of the great bay in which they had wintered. Part of this time they were detained by the ice; but several days were spent in searching for the passage into Davis's Strait. During this time they landed often, and sometimes succeeded in catching a few fish or wild fowl; but supplied their wants principally by gathering the cockle-grass, which was growing in abundance on every part of the shore. They arrived within sight of Digges's Cape about the last of July, and immediately sent the boat on shore for provisions. The men who landed found considerable quantities of game, as it was a place where the wild fowl breed. There were great numbers of savages about the shore, who appeared very friendly, and testified their joy by lively gestures.

The next day, Henry Greene went ashore, accompanied by Wilson, Thomas, Perse, Moler, and Pricket. The last was left in the boat, which was made fast to a large rock, and the others went on shore in search of provisions. While some of the men were busy in gathering sorrel from the rocks, and Greene was surrounded by the natives, with whom he was trading, Pricket, who was lying in the stern of the boat, observed one of the savages coming in at the bows. Pricket made signs to him to keep off; and while he was thus occupied, another

er savage stole round behind him. Pricket suddenly saw the leg and foot of a man by him, and looking up, perceived a savage with a knife in his hand, aiming a blow at him. He prevented the wound from being fatal, by raising his arm and warding off the blow; but was still severely cut. Springing up, he grappled with the savage, and drawing his dagger, at length put him to death.

In the mean time, Greene and the others were assaulted by the savages on shore, and with difficulty reached the boat, all of them wounded except Perse and Moter. The latter saved his life by plunging into the water, and catching hold of the stern of the boat. No sooner had they pushed off, than the savages let fly a shower of arrows, which killed Greene outright, and mortally wounded some of the others, among them Perse, who had hitherto escaped. Perse and Moter began to row towards the ship, but Perse soon fainted, and Moter was left to manage the boat alone, as he had escaped unwounded. The body of Greene was thrown immediately into the sea. Wilson and Thomas died that day in great torture, and Perse two days afterwards.

The remainder of the crew were glad to depart from the scene of this fatal combat, and immediately set sail, with the intention of reaching Ireland as soon as possible. While they were in the strait, they managed to kill a few wild fowl occasionally; but the supply was so small, that they were obliged to limit the crew to half a fowl a day, which they cooked with meal; but this soon failed, and they were forced to devour the candles. The cook fried the bones of the fowls in tallow, and mixed this mess with vinegar, which, says Pricket, was "a great daintie."

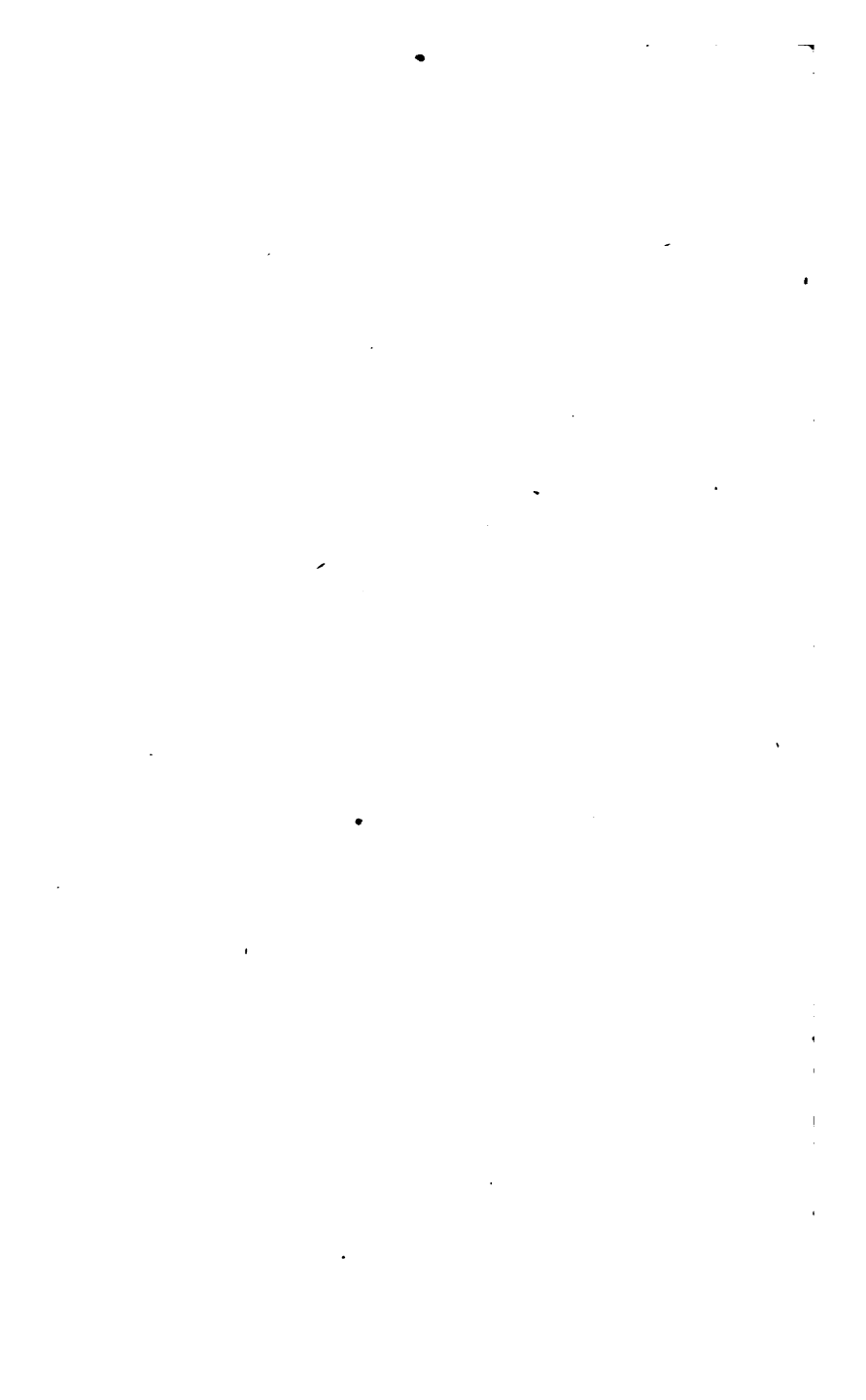
Before they reached Ireland, they were so weakened, that they were forced to sit at the helm to steer, as no one among them was able to stand. Just before they came in sight of land, Juet died of want, thus meeting the very fate, to avoid which he had murdered his commander and friend. The men were now in utter despair. Only one fowl was left for their subsistence, and another

day would be their last. They abandoned all care of the vessel, and prepared to meet their fate, when the joyful cry of "a sail," was heard. It proved to be a fishing vessel, which took them into a harbor in Ireland, from which they hired a pilot to take them to England; where they all arrived in safety, after an absence of a year and five months.

The year following, the *Discovery*, the vessel in which Hudson made his last voyage, and the *Resolution*, were sent out, under the command of Captain Thomas Button, who was accompanied by Pricket, in the hope of learning something of the fate of Hudson, and of relieving him; and, at the same time, to discover, if possible, the northwest passage. Pricket had observed, in the voyage with Hudson, when the ship had struck upon a rock near Digges's Island, that a strong tide from the westward had floated her off again. The London Company had hopes, from this fact, that there might be a passage to the western ocean at no great distance from this place. The expedition was unsuccessful in both objects. No tidings of Hudson could ever be gained; and the discovery of the northwest passage is a problem, which, after the lapse of more than two centuries, has scarcely yet been solved.

LIFE
OF
JOSEPH WARREN;
BY
ALEXANDER H. EVERETT, LL. D.

.



JOSEPH WARREN.

CHAPTER I.

His Family and Education.

THE name of JOSEPH WARREN is one of the most conspicuous in the annals of the Revolution. His memory is cherished with even warmer regard than that of some others, who, from the greater length of their career, and the wider sphere in which they acted, may be supposed to have rendered more important services to the country. This distinction in his favor is owing in part to the chivalrous beauty of his character, which naturally excites a sympathetic glow in every feeling mind; and in part to that untimely but glorious fate, which consecrated him as the first distinguished martyr in the cause of independence and liberty.

It is much to be regretted, that the materials for the biography of one, in whom we feel so deep an interest, are not more abundant; but the circumstances of his active life were not such as to create a large mass of written and published documents for the information of future ages. The short period of time during which he was prominent in public affairs, and the confined circle that limited his efforts, afforded no scope for the voluminous correspondence, which forms the basis of the biography of most distinguished men. It is chiefly, therefore, as the young martyr of Bunker's Hill, that he lives, and will for ever live, in the memory of his countrymen. What ambition could desire a more glorious destiny? In consequence of this deficiency of materials, the present brief notice will be necessarily confined,

in a great measure, to a rapid sketch of the events that filled up, or immediately preceded, that memorable day. A few particulars of his early life, which have been preserved by the affectionate care of his family, may serve as an introduction.

JOSEPH WARREN was born at Roxbury, in Massachusetts, in the year 1741. The house in which his father resided is still standing, near the centre of the principal village, in a street which has received his name. The father was chiefly employed in the cultivation of land, and particularly in raising fruit. He was the person who introduced into the neighborhood of Boston the species of apple denominated from him the *Warren Russet*. One day in autumn, as he was walking in his orchard, after the apples had been mostly gathered, he saw one remaining upon the top of a tree, which tempted him by its uncommon beauty. He climbed the tree to pluck it; but, just as he was putting his hand upon the apple, the branch upon which he stood broke under him, and precipitated him to the ground a lifeless corpse. His youngest son, the late Dr. John Warren, of Boston, then four years old, who had been despatched by his mother to the orchard, to call his father to dinner, met the body borne by two laborers. By this fatal accident, the mother of Warren was left a widow, with the charge of four boys, of whom the eldest, Joseph, was then about sixteen years of age. The fidelity, with which she executed this arduous trust, is sufficiently attested by the eminent virtues and talents of her children. She lived to a very advanced age, at the house in Roxbury, surrounded by the younger members of the family, and reaping, in their affectionate attention, the best reward for the exemplary care with which she had herself discharged the maternal duties.

Joseph Warren was instructed in the rudiments of learning at the public school in Roxbury, one of the best endowed and most flourishing in Massachusetts, and entered Harvard College at fourteen years of age. He was remarked at school and at college, as a young man of superior talents, gentle manners, and a frank, inde-

pendent, and fearless character. A trifling incident, which occurred during his residence at Cambridge, and of which an account has been handed down by tradition, illustrates very agreeably the last of these qualities, and may, perhaps, be worth repeating.

A number of Warren's classmates were engaged in one of those youthful frolics, which occur periodically at all colleges, but of which they knew that Warren did not approve. The leaders, apprehending, that, if he were present at their meetings, his eloquence and influence would draw off their followers and defeat the plan, determined to prevent him from attending. They accordingly fastened the door of the room in which they met, and which was in the upper story of one of the college buildings. Finding that he could not get in at the door, and perceiving that there was an open window in the room, Warren determined to effect his entrance by that way, from the roof. He accordingly ascended the stairs to the top of the building, and getting out upon the roof, let himself down to the eaves, and thence, by the aid of a spout, to a level with the open window, through which he leaped into the midst of the conspirators. The spout, which was of wood, was old, and so much decayed, that it fell to the ground as soon as Warren relaxed his hold upon it. His companions, hearing the crash, rushed to the window, and, when they perceived the cause, loudly congratulated him upon his escape. He coolly remarked, that the spout had retained its position just long enough to serve his purpose, and, without further notice of the accident, proceeded to harangue his audience upon the matter in hand. We are not informed of the result; but it can hardly be doubted, that prudent counsels, advanced with so much fearlessness and address, were adopted.

This little anecdote was related fifty years after the occurrence of the incident described, that is, about the year 1807, by a person who was present at the time, and who pointed out the window, which was the scene of a part of the action. There is, therefore, little doubt of the correctness of the statement. It exhibits, on a

small scale, the same combination of qualities, which afterwards led Warren, at the most eventful period of his life, first, to dissuade his more aged and experienced colleagues in council, from engaging in the attempt to occupy the heights of Charlestown; and, when his efforts proved ineffectual, to throw himself forward, into the midst of danger, and perish in endeavoring to give effect to the plan, which he had vainly opposed. He seems, in fact, to have possessed by nature, and to have exercised through life, that precious union of valor and discretion, which is so rarely to be met with, and which, when it does exist, constitutes the perfection of practical wisdom.

CHAPTER II.

His Professional Studies and Practice.—Entrance into Political Life.

WARREN left college at the close of the usual period of residence, and applied himself immediately to the study of medicine. At the age of twenty-three, he established himself at Boston, and commenced the practice of his profession, which he pursued with distinguished success.

He is represented as having been particularly fortunate in his treatment of the smallpox, which prevailed about this time in Boston, and was then a much more formidable disease than it is now. In fact, the zeal with which he entered upon the study and practice of his profession, his fine talents and finished education, together with his agreeable person and manners, and naturally frank and amiable character, opened before him an easy path to wealth and eminence. In quiet times, he would have risen rapidly to the highest rank as a physician, passed his life in the active and literary pursuits belonging to that profession, and bequeathed to posterity a name dis-

anguished only by the peaceful triumphs of science and letters. During the brief period of his professional career, he had acquired so much distinction, that, at the opening of the war, he was designated as Surgeon-General of the army; and it was after having declined this place, that he was elected Major-General.

But the circumstances, in which the country was then placed, almost necessarily directed the attention of Warren from professional pursuits, and concentrated it upon political affairs. The same superiority of talent, and ardor of temperament, which would have given him an easy success in any profession, rendered him more than ordinarily susceptible of the influences, which then operated upon the community; and threw him forward into the front rank of the asserters of liberal principles. The fact, however, that men like Warren, of the finest talents, and in every respect the fairest promise, were among the first to join in the opposition to the measures of the government, shows sufficiently how completely the whole mind of the colonies had given itself up to the cause, and how utterly impossible it was for the ministry to sustain their pretensions by any power that could be brought to bear upon the people of America.

The establishment of Warren in Boston, as a physician, coincided with the close of the Seven Years' War, which was terminated by the definitive treaty of Paris, of 1763. By that treaty, France, then in the last stages of that long disease of misgovernment, which finally produced, by reaction, the convulsions that marked the termination of the century, threw from her, as if in wantonness, the whole splendid domain, which she had previously possessed on this continent; and which, had it been retained, and well administered, must have ultimately rendered her mistress of the whole. The two Canadas and Florida were ceded to England. Louisiana, the boundaries of which were then unsettled, but which, as claimed by France, included the whole vast valley on both sides of the Mississippi, from the foot of the Alleghanies on the east, to that of the Rocky Mountains on the west, was transferred to Spain. This arrangement, so fatal

to the greatness of France, was generally considered, at the time, as securing to the British crown the dominion of the whole of North America. Possessing, already, an unbroken line of coast, from Hudson's Bay round to the mouth of the Mississippi, with nothing to oppose her inland progress, but a torpid Spanish colonial government, there was every reason to expect, that, as population and civilization advanced in the colonies, the British government would gradually, by conquest and purchase, push the unsettled boundary of Louisiana farther and farther to the westward, until they had driven the Spaniards from the continent. The same career, in short, was anticipated for America, as an appendage to Britain, which she has already pursued, and is still pursuing, as a union of independent States.

This was one of those cases, in which the course of events belies the most probable conjectures. The cession of the Canadas to Great Britain, instead of increasing her power upon the continent, was one of the most active immediate causes of the dismemberment of the empire. While the French, in close alliance with the natives, over whom they have always exercised a much stronger influence than any other European nation, hung upon the rear of the colonies, and, whenever Great Britain and France were at war, carried fire and sword through their peaceful villages, their whole military and political activity was exhausted in efforts to ward off this imminent danger. The cooperation of the mother country in effecting this object, naturally generated good feeling between the parties; and, as long as this relation continued to exist, it did much to prevent any considerable difference upon any subject. Never had this cooperation between the parent country and the colonies been so cordial; and never had the colonies distinguished themselves so much by their zeal and success in supporting the pretensions of the crown, against a foreign enemy, as in the brilliant campaigns of the Seven Years', or, as it is has often been called, in this country, the Old French War, the great school in which our fathers disciplined and exercised themselves for the desperate struggles of the Revolution.

ion of the Canadas to Great Britain, deliveries from this dangerous neighborhood, and employment for the intense political activity they had always been accustomed, but the adjustment of relations with the parent country. By a sudden stroke, the ministry seized the moment to enter upon a new system of policy, involving pretensions and demands which had never been put forth before, and to which the colonies could hardly be expected to give assent. Till now, they had paid no taxes, except those imposed by their own legislatures, for the defraying their own colonial and municipal expenses; they were now called upon to contribute to the expenses of the empire, by taxes imposed upon their participation, by the general government. The effect was electric; and the magnitude of the change is hardly less astonishing, than the rapidity with which they were brought about.

At the conclusion of the definitive treaty of 1763, which terminated the French war, and the battles of the Clouds and Bunker's Hill, which opened that of the Revolution, there intervened a period of only eleven years. The officers, who had distinguished themselves in the former wars, were still surviving, in the full vigor of their abilities, to give their countrymen the benefit of their experience and skill in this new struggle. The same eye, which, at the first capture of Louisbourg, on the 17th of June, 1745, directed the shell upon the citadel, and occasioned the surrender of the fortress, was employed, on the thirteenth anniversary of the battle of the Clouds, in laying out a position for the first regular engagement between the colonial and British armies. In some cases, are the movements that regulate the fortunes of nations, and change the aspect of the

period of eleven years, which intervened between the conclusion of the French war, and the opening of that of the Revolution, was filled up by a succession of interesting events, many of which occurred in the neighborhood of Boston. The Stamp Act; the tumults which

followed it; its repeal; the Tea Act; the troubles which attended its enforcement, and which terminated in the celebrated Boston *Tea Party*; the military occupation of Boston by the British army; the hostile encounters, that occurred so frequently between the troops and the citizens, including the fatal events of the 5th of March, 1770; these occurrences, with various others, of less importance but similar character, were the preludes to the far-famed tragedies of the 19th of April, and the 17th of June, 1775. A detailed review of these events, would, of course, be irrelevant to the present occasion. They belong to the history of the country. It may be proper, however, to advert to the part taken by General Warren, on one or two of these occasions, before proceeding to a somewhat fuller account of the brief period, during which he may be said to have been the leading spirit of the colony, and which will be for ever distinguished in our annals by the memorable battles of Lexington and Bunker's Hill.

CHAPTER III.

Events of the 5th of March, 1770.—Warren's Anniversary Addresses.

THE great authority and influence, which Dr. Warren exercised over his fellow-citizens a few years afterwards, evidently show, that he must have taken an active and zealous part in political affairs, from the commencement of his residence at Boston, which coincided, as has been remarked, with the close of the French war. For some time, however, his activity must, of course, have been confined to a secondary sphere. The foreground of the stage was already occupied by the great men, who will figure in history as the fathers of the Revolution, John Hancock, John and Samuel Adams, James Otis, Josiah Quincy.

While these eminent characters were on the spot, and in full activity, the patriots of a younger class labored, of course, under their direction. This was the position of Warren for the first seven or eight years of his residence at Boston. At the close of that time, accidental circumstances removed, or deprived of their capacity for usefulness, at once, nearly all the persons who had acted as leaders in Massachusetts. Otis lost his health, and retired into the country. Quincy left the colony to visit Europe, and returned the next year, only to breathe his last sigh upon the shores of his beloved country. Hancock and the two Adamses, with Robert Treat Paine and Elbridge Gerry, represented the colony in the Continental Congress. In their absence, the direction of affairs passed, of course, into the hands of the prominent patriots of the next succeeding generation; and it was then, that the commanding genius of Warren carried him, at once, to the helm, and rendered him, for the brief period of his subsequent life, both in civil and military affairs, the most prominent man in New England.

It was one of the distinguishing traits in the character of Warren, that he combined in a remarkable degree the qualities requisite for excellence in civil pursuits, with a strong taste and aptitude for war. In this particular, he stood alone among the leading patriots of Massachusetts; and the circumstance, had his life been prolonged, would have contributed very much to establish and extend his political influence. He also possessed, in high perfection, the gift of eloquence; and, in exercising it, he is represented as having exhibited the discretion, which, in all respects, tempered so honorably the ardor of his character. His voice was often raised in public, for the purpose of dissuading the people from tumultuous movements, and exhorting them to seek redress for their wrongs, as much as possible, according to the forms of law, and without detriment to the rights of individuals, or a breach of the public peace.

The first occasion, however, on which the name of Dr. Warren appears in connexion with any public pro-

ceedings, was one when his eloquence was exerted for a purpose more congenial to the feelings of an ardent patriot. I allude to the addresses which he delivered on the 5th of March, 1772 and 1775, in commemoration of the sanguinary scene which was exhibited in Boston, on the same day of the year 1770.

The riots, which followed the attempt to enforce the new revenue laws at Boston, however natural under the circumstances, produced, as must have been expected, the military occupation of the place by British troops. In the course of the year 1768, two regiments, which had previously been stationed at Halifax, and two from Ireland, making, with part of a regiment of artillery, a corps of about four thousand men, arrived at Boston. They were placed under the command of General Gage, an officer who had honorably distinguished himself in the preceding French war. The General, whose headquarters were at New York, came to Boston, to superintend the arrangements for quartering the troops, which were not effected without great difficulty, and much opposition from the inhabitants. It was, in fact, found impossible to induce them to furnish barracks, agreeably to the act of parliament, providing for the occupation; and the General was compelled to hire houses for the accommodation of three of the regiments. The fourth, with the artillery, was quartered in tents upon the Common.

The military occupation of Boston, although, on the view of things which was taken by the ministry, a matter of indispensable necessity, led, of course, to frequent quarrels between the troops and the citizens. In these, the latter were, probably, from the nature of the case, pretty often in the wrong. This was certainly the fact on the famous occasion of the 5th of March, 1770.

On the evening of that day, a mob of citizens, armed with clubs, without any previous provocation, insulted, and finally assaulted, the soldiers, who were on guard at the Custom House, in King Street, now State Street. The guard exhibited great forbearance, and it was not until one of their number had been actually knocked down at his post by one of the mob, that they fired;

whether with or without orders was afterwards disputed. The first discharge killed three persons on the spot, and mortally wounded two others. Here the affray terminated; and, so clearly were the citizens in the wrong, that Captain Preston, who, as commanding officer of the guard, had been brought to trial, was acquitted by a verdict of the jury, having been defended by the two great leaders of the patriotic party, John Adams and Josiah Quincy.

But whatever might be the merits of the case on this occasion, as between the parties immediately engaged, it was impossible, on a general view of the subject, not to regard the occurrence as one of the unfortunate results of the new line of policy adopted by the British government. If the bloody retribution, which unreflecting citizens had brought upon themselves by excesses growing out of the exasperation produced by the ministerial measures, were in itself technically, and even substantially, as between the immediate parties, just, this was only an additional reason for regretting and reprobating a policy, which almost inevitably drew the people into that worst of all misfortunes, the commission of voluntary wrong; which first led them into temptation, and then punished them for yielding to it. Considering the occurrence under this aspect, the leading patriots determined to set apart the day for an annual celebration; and it was accordingly so observed for several years, until the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was finally substituted for it, as furnishing, on the whole, a more suitable occasion for commemorating the great results of the controversy between the mother country and the United Colonies. This arrangement has been continued ever since, and will probably never be abandoned, while the union of the States is permitted to endure.

On the second of the anniversary celebrations of the 5th of March, in the year 1772, Samuel Adams was invited to deliver the address. He declined the task, which was then committed to Dr. Warren, who acquitted himself with great ability. On a similar occasion

three years afterwards, he again delivered an address, which has attracted more attention than the former one, from the thrilling interest of the circumstances in which the orator was placed, and the more excited state of the whole community.

The mutual exasperation between the troops and the citizens had then reached a very high point; and it had come to be considered as a service of a somewhat critical character, to deliver the anniversary oration. Warren volunteered to perform the duty. When the day arrived, the aisles of the church, the pulpit stairs, the pulpit itself, were occupied by the officers and soldiers of the garrison, who were doubtless stationed there to overawe the orator, and perhaps, prevent him, by force, from proceeding. Warren, to avoid interruption and confusion, entered from the rear, by the pulpit window; and, unmoved by the hostile military array that surrounded him, and pressed upon his person, delivered the bold and stirring address, which we have in print. It combines, with a somewhat exuberant display of imagination, a firm exposition of the rights of the colonies, and the sternest denunciation of the previous excesses of the troops, in whose presence he stood. Such was the influence of his courage and eloquence, that he was listened to without a murmur.

I am informed, however, by the Rev. Dr. Homer, of Newton, Massachusetts, who was present on this occasion in the Old South Church, where the address was delivered, that there was, at least, one silent but not wholly insignificant demonstration of feeling, from the military part of the audience. While the oration was in progress, an officer, who was seated on the pulpit stairs, held up one of his hands, in view of the orator, with several pistol bullets on the open palm. Warren observed the action, and, without discontinuing his discourse, dropped a white handkerchief upon the officer's hand. How happy had it been for the country, if this gentle and graceful admonition could have arrested the march of violence, and averted the fatal presage afforded by this sinister occurrence of the future fate of the patriotic

speaker; a presage too soon and too exactly realized, on the following 17th of June.

CHAPTER IV.

Political Organization of Massachusetts.—Warren is elected President of the Provincial Congress, and Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety.—Events of the 19th of April, 1775.

THE first public appearance of Dr. Warren, in connexion with the political affairs of the day, was, as I have remarked, on the occasion of the delivery of the anniversary address of 1772. In that year, the Committee of Correspondence was formed at Boston; an institution which exercised, in a private way, a very strong influence in promoting the progress of the Revolution.* Of this committee, Dr. Warren was an original member. The earliest active proceedings, of a public character, in which he took a part, were those which grew out of Governor Gage's determination to fortify the southern entrance of Boston, by lines drawn across the isthmus or Neck, which unites it with Roxbury.

On this occasion, a convention was held, of delegates from all the towns in the county of Suffolk, which then comprehended the present county of Norfolk, for the purpose of endeavoring to prevent this measure from being carried into effect. Dr. Warren was a delegate to this convention, and was made chairman of the com-

* This Committee was designed for corresponding with the several towns in Massachusetts. The plan was first suggested by James Warren, of Plymouth. The Committees of Correspondence for the Colonies were organized the year following, and were first proposed by the Virginia House of Burgesses, in March, 1773. The same system of Committees of Correspondence had likewise been adopted to some extent in the time of the Stamp Act. See Sparks's edition of FRANKLIN'S WRITINGS, Vol. VII. p. 264.

mittee, which was appointed to prepare an address to the Governor upon the subject. The Governor replied, in a brief and unsatisfactory manner. The committee rejoined in another address, of greater length, which was transmitted to the Governor, but received no answer. These papers were written by Dr. Warren, and they give a very favorable idea of his literary taste and talent, as well as of his courage and patriotism. The correspondence was communicated by Dr. Warren, as chairman of the committee, to the Continental Congress[†]; and that body, in their reply, notice, in terms of high approbation, the part taken in it by the committee.

Dr. Warren had never served as a representative in the General Court of Massachusetts, under the colonial government. The representation of Boston was, at that time, very limited in number, and naturally fell into the hands of the more experienced among the patriotic leaders. These, however, as has been already stated, were removed, by a concurrence of accidental circumstances, from this quarter of the country, at about the time when the government was reorganized, under the direction of the popular party, in the autumn of 1774. The legislative power was intrusted, under this arrangement, to a body of delegates, denominated the Massachusetts Congress; and the executive power was exercised by a committee of thirteen from that body, called the Committee of Public Safety.

The high sense, which was now entertained by his fellow-citizens, of the value of the services of Warren to the cause of liberty, was strikingly evinced on this occasion; first, by his election as a delegate from Boston to the Congress; and secondly, by his designation as President of that body, and Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety. By virtue of these places, he united in his person the chief responsibility for the conduct of the whole civil and military affairs of the new commonwealth, and became a sort of popular dictator. The Congress was organized at Salem, but shortly after removed to Concord, and, a few days before the battle of Lexington, adjourned to meet again at Watertown, on

f May, 1775. The Committee of Safety held
gs, at this time, in a public house at West
e, and seems to have been in session every day.
soon apparent, that the station now occupied by
the councils of Massachusetts would be no

The second anniversary address which he
on the 6th of March, 1775, was the bold and
ing overture to the events of the following 19th
nd 17th of June.

ents of the 19th of April, including the battles
gton and Concord, were of such a character,
dividual could well occupy a very conspicuous
the field. There was no commander-in-chief,
erly speaking, no regular engagement or battle.
ect of the British was to destroy the military
Concord; that of the Americans, to prevent
ossible, and to show, at all events, that, in this
of the country at least, every inch of ground
e desperately contested. For the vigor and
ation, which marked the conduct of the people
mportant day, it is not too much to say, that the
is mainly indebted to the vigilance, activity, and
of Warren.

l been the intention of the British commander, to
the Americans; and so severe were the pre-
taken for this purpose, that the officers employed
xpedition were only informed of it on the pre-
day. Information of a meditated attack had been,
r, for some time in possession of the Americans;
t intimation having been given, as is said, by a
c lady of Boston, the wife of a royalist officer.
t vigilant observation was, in consequence, main-
upon the movements of the British; and, in this
on, great advantage was derived from the services
ssociation, composed chiefly of Boston mechanics,
had been formed in the autumn of the preceding

The late Colonel Paul Revere was an active
er of this society, and was employed by Dr. War-
n this occasion, as his principal confidential mes-

Some preparatory movements took place among the British troops, on the 15th of April, which attracted the attention of Warren. It was known, that the principal objects of the contemplated expedition were to seize the stores at Concord. Presuming that the movement would now be made without delay, the Committee of Safety took measures for securing the stores, by distributing a part of them among the neighboring towns. John Hancock and Samuel Adams were then at the house of the Reverend Mr. Clark, in Lexington, and Colonel Revere was despatched as a special messenger to inform them of the probable designs of General Gage. On his return to Boston, he made an agreement with friends in Charlestown, that, if the expedition proceeded by water, two lights should be displayed on the steeple of the North Church; if it moved over the neck, through Roxbury, only one.

The British commander finally fixed upon the 19th for the intended attempt; and, on the evening of the 18th, he sent for the officers whom he had designated for this service, and communicated to them, for the first time, the nature of the expedition upon which they were to be employed. So strict had been the secrecy observed by the Governor, in regard to this matter. The same discretion had not been maintained in other quarters; for Lord Percy, who was to command the reserve, on his way home to his lodgings, heard the expedition talked of, by a group of citizens, at the corner of one of the streets. He hastened back to the Governor's headquarters, and informed him, that he had been betrayed. An order was instantly issued, to prevent any American from leaving town; but it came a few minutes too late to produce effect. Dr. Warren, who had returned in the evening from the meeting of the Committee of Public Safety, at West Cambridge, was already informed of the movement of the British army, and had taken the necessary measures for spreading the intelligence through the country.

At about nine o'clock, on the evening of the 18th, the British troops intended for the expedition were embarked,

under the command of Colonel Small, in boats at the bottom of the Common. Dr. Warren inspected the embarkation in person; and, having returned home immediately after, sent for Colonel Revere, who reached his house about ten o'clock. He had already despatched Mr. Dawes over land as a special messenger to Lexington, and he now requested Colonel Revere to proceed through Charlestown on the same errand.

The Colonel made arrangements, in the first place, for displaying the two lights on the steeple of the North Church, agreeably to the understanding with his friends in Charlestown, and then repaired to a wharf, at the north part of the town, where he kept his boat. He was rowed over by two friends, a little to the eastward of the British ship-of-war *Somerset*, which lay at anchor in this part of the channel, and was landed on the Charlestown side. He pursued his way through Charlestown and West Cambridge, not without several perilous encounters with British officers, who were patrolling the neighborhood, and finally arrived safely at Lexington, where he met the other messenger, Mr. Dawes, whom he had, however, anticipated. After reposing a short time, they proceeded together to Concord, alarming the whole country as they went, by literally knocking at the door of almost every house upon the road. They had, of course, been in part anticipated by the signals on the North Church steeple, which had spread intelligence of the intended movement, with the speed of light, through all the neighboring towns.

By the effect of these well-judged and well-executed measures, Hancock and Adams were enabled to provide in season for their personal security, and the whole population of the towns, through which the British troops were to pass, were roused and on foot before they made their appearance. On reaching Lexington Green, they found a corps of militia under arms and prepared to meet them. At Concord, they found another; and when, after effecting, as far as they could, the objects of their expedition, they turned their steps homeward, they were enveloped, as it were, in a cloud of the armed yeomanry,

which thickened around them at every step, and did such fearful execution in their ranks, that nothing but their timely meeting with the reenforcements under Lord Percy, at West Cambridge, could have saved them from entire disorganization and actual surrender.

Colonel Revere, many years afterwards, drew up a very curious and interesting account of his adventures on this expedition, in the form of a letter to the corresponding secretary of the Massachusetts Historical Society, which is printed in the Collections of that body, and is now familiar to the public.

It would be irrelevant to the present purpose to enter into the detail of the events of the 19th of April, in which Dr. Warren took no further part, until the British troops reached West Cambridge, on their return from Concord. Warren was at this place, in attendance on the Committee of Safety. On the approach of the British, he armed himself and went out, in company with General Heath, to meet them. On this occasion, he displayed his usual fearlessness, by exposing his person very freely to the fire of the enemy; and a bullet passed so near his head, as to carry away one of the long, close, horizontal curls, which, agreeably to the fashion of the day, he wore above the ears.

In other times, this accident might, perhaps, have been regarded as a sinister omen. When the priests of the ancient religions sacrificed a victim to their divinities, they commonly began by cutting off a lock of his hair, and throwing it into the fire. By this ceremony, he was supposed to be devoted to the god. A mind under the influence of such a prejudice might have seen, in the loss of General Warren's hair, a presage of the doom that awaited him. But Warren himself, even in a superstitious age, would never have yielded to any such notions. His frank, fearless, and generous character would have rather led him to sympathize with the gallant Trojan hero, in the Iliad, who, when he was advised to wait, before he entered upon a battle, till the omens, deduced from the flight of birds, should become favorable, replied, "What care I for the flight of birds,

whether they take their course to the right or the left?
I ask no better omen than to draw my sword in the
cause of my country."

"Without a sign his sword the brave man draws;
And asks no omen but his country's cause."

CHAPTER V.

*Formation and Character of the New England Army.
—Warren is elected Major-General.—Gridley.—
Prescott.—Putnam.*

THE events of the 19th of April announced to all the world, abroad and at home, that the long-anticipated crisis had arrived; and that the questions at issue, between the parent country and the colonies, must be settled by an appeal to arms.

The public mind throughout the colonies was prepared for the result. At their first meeting, after the battle of Lexington, the Massachusetts Congress resolved, that an army of thirty thousand men was wanted for the defence of New England; that, of this number, Massachusetts would raise thirteen thousand six hundred; and that the other New England States should be requested to furnish their respective proportions. It was resolved, at the same time, to raise a regiment of artillery, the train to consist of nine fieldpieces; and Richard Gridley, a brother of the celebrated lawyer of that name, himself already distinguished by his services in both the preceding French wars, was appointed its colonel. The troops began to assemble about the middle of May; and, before the middle of June, fifteen thousand men had reached the neighborhood of Boston. Of these, Massachusetts furnished ten thousand, and Connecticut three. The rest were supplied by the other New England Colonies. The troops were distributed into companies of fifty, of which ten composed a regiment.

On the 21st of May, General Ward was commissioned as commander-in-chief of the Massachusetts forces, and his orders were obeyed by all the other troops within the limits of the colony. His headquarters were at Cambridge, where he had with him about eight thousand of the Massachusetts troops, and one thousand of those from Connecticut. The latter, with Sargent's regiment from New Hampshire, and Patterson's from Berkshire county, were under the immediate command of General Putnam, who was stationed in advance of the main body, at Inman's Farm, where a redoubt and breastwork had been thrown up, near the Charlestown road. General Ward had with him at Cambridge five companies of artillery.

The right wing of the army, consisting of two thousand troops from Massachusetts, two thousand from Connecticut, and one thousand from Rhode Island, was stationed at Roxbury, under the command of Brigadier-General Thomas, who had also with him three or four companies of artillery. A thousand of the New Hampshire troops, under Colonels Stark and Reed, stationed at Medford, and another detachment of the same troops, with three companies from Gerrish's regiment, stationed at Chelsea, composed the left wing.

On the 14th of June, Dr. Warren was elected by Congress a major-general. He had already received his commission, when he went upon the field as a volunteer, three days after, at the battle of Bunker's Hill.

Such were the strength and composition of the little army, which the events of the 19th of April and the resolutions of the Congress had summoned, from all parts of New England, to the neighborhood of Boston. In regard to the character of the troops, it is sufficient to say, that they were the flower and pride of our hardy yeomanry. They were not, like the rank and file of the regular armies of Europe, the refuse of society, enlisted in the worst haunts of crowded cities, under the influence of a large bounty, or perhaps an inspiration of a still inferior kind. They were, as they are correctly

described, in the British "circumstantial account" of the battle of Lexington, the "country people."

Though generally unaccustomed to regular service, and not well skilled in the technical learning of the art of war, they were all, officers and men, expert in the use of arms, and in the habit of employing them in continual conflicts with the Indians. Many of the officers had already distinguished themselves in the French wars of 1745 and 1756, when the old Provincial standard was displayed, with so much glory, in the Canadas. It is remarkable, indeed, on examining the composition of the New England army of 1775, how many names we find of men, either previously or subsequently illustrious in the history of the country. The fact is one, among many other proofs, how completely the spirit of the times had taken possession of the whole mind of the colonies, and drawn within the sphere of its influence the most eminent professional, political, and military characters, as well as the mass of the people.

Of the officers, who commanded in this army, Warren has been rendered, by subsequent events, by far the most conspicuous. Prescott and Putnam, both veterans of the former wars, occupied with him, at the time, the highest place in the confidence of the country. But in addition to these, there were many others whose names are not much less extensively known throughout the world than theirs. General Greene, by common acknowledgement second only to Washington in military service during the Revolutionary War, was the colonel of one of the Rhode Island regiments. General Pomroy, of Northampton, was at headquarters as a volunteer. He had served, with the rank of captain, under Sir William Johnson, in the war of 1756; and he was distinguished in the celebrated battle with the French and Indians under Baron Dieskau. Stark, afterwards the hero of Bennington, was the colonel of one of the New Hampshire regiments, in which the late General Dearborn was a captain. The late Governor Brooks, of Massachusetts, had the rank of major; the late Governor

Eustis was a surgeon of artillery; Knox, afterwards a general in the continental army, appeared as a volunteer.

Gridley, the veteran colonel of artillery, then sixty-four years of age, was an officer of high distinction. In the war of 1745, when Massachusetts alone raised an army of three thousand two hundred men for the expedition against Cape Breton, he commanded the artillery, and, as was remarked before, pointed, with scientific accuracy, the mortar, which, on the third fire, threw into the citadel of Louisburg the shell, which determined its surrender. He was rewarded by a captaincy in Shirley's regiment. In the war of 1756, he again entered the service, as chief engineer and colonel of infantry. Two years afterwards, he assisted at the second taking of Louisburg, with so much distinction, that General Amherst tendered him the valuable furniture of the French commander's headquarters, as a present; which he, with chivalrous delicacy, declined to receive. At the siege of Quebec, he commanded the provincial artillery under General Wolfe, and was fighting by his side when he fell. At the close of the war, the King rewarded his gallantry by a grant of the Magdalen Islands, with an extensive cod and seal fishery, and half pay as a British officer. At the opening of the Revolution, his agent at London inquired of him, by order of the British government, what part he intended to take. "I shall fight," he replied, "for justice and my country." His pay as a British officer, was of course stopped. The arrears, which were offered him, he, with characteristic spirit, refused to receive.

To this list of distinguished persons, whose presence graced the New England army, may be added the name of one now more extensively known, perhaps, than any of the others, though in a different line; and who, subsequently to this period, entered the British service. I mean that of Benjamin Thompson, afterwards Count Rumford. He held no commission in the New England army, but was present at headquarters, and, on the day of the battle of Bunker's Hill, accompanied Major Brooks as a volunteer, with the last reinforcements that were

sent from Cambridge. He had solicited in vain the place of major in the artillery, which was due to his eminent merit, but which the parental partiality of Gridley had reserved for his own son. For this act of venial frailty the veteran was severely punished, by the misconduct of his son in his first action on the 17th of June, and by the loss to the country of the great talents of his competitor; a loss, however, which we need not regret, considering with how much brilliancy and success those talents were afterwards employed, on a still more extensive scale, in the cause of humanity and the world.

While these and other kindred spirits, of perhaps not inferior merit, though somewhat less distinguished fame, filled the ranks of the New England army, the two persons, who, with Warren, occupied the most conspicuous place in the public eye, were undoubtedly Prescott and Putnam.

Prescott, the colonel of one of the Middlesex regiments, was the officer, who, on the 16th of June, received the orders of the commander-in-chief to occupy and fortify the heights of Charlestown, and who commanded in the redoubt on the day of the battle. He was a native of Pepperell, in the county of Middlesex, where his family, one of the most distinguished and respected in the State, still reside during a part of the year. Prescott inherited an ample fortune from his father; but he seems to have possessed a natural aptitude for military pursuits; and, at the opening of the war of 1756, he, with so many others of the noble spirits of New England, joined the expedition against Nova Scotia, under General Winslow, with a provincial commission.

He served with such distinction, that, after the close of the war, he was urged to accept a commission in the British line; but he declined the honor, and preferred returning to the paternal estate. Here he resided, occupied in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, and in dispensing a frank and liberal hospitality to his neighbors, many of whom were his old companions in arms, until the opening of the Revolution called him, already a veteran, to the council and the field. He was tall and com-

manding in his person, of a grave aspect, and the simplest manners, holding in utter contempt the parade and pageantry, which constitute with many the essence of war. During the progress of the battle of Bunker's Hill, he was frequently seen on the top of the parapet, attired in a calico frock, with his bald head uncovered to the sun, observing the enemy, or encouraging his men to action. Governor Gage, who, at one of these moments, was reconnoitering the American works through a telescope, remarked the singular appearance of Prescott, and inquired of Willard, one of the council, who he was. "My brother-in-law, Colonel Prescott," was the reply. "Will he fight?" returned the Governor. "Ay," said Willard, "to the last drop of his blood."

Putnam, another veteran of the French wars, was not less bold in action, and equally regardless of unnecessary show and ceremony. He was a native of Salem, in Massachusetts, but emigrated early in life to Pomfret, in Connecticut, where he employed himself, like Prescott, in agriculture, though on a smaller scale, until he was called, like him, into the military service, by the opening of the war of 1756. He commanded a company of provincial rangers, and, in this capacity, rendered the most essential services, passing through a series of adventures, the details of which, though resting on unquestionable evidence, seem like a wild and extravagant fable. After the close of the Seven Years' War, Putnam returned to the plough, and was in the act of guiding it, when he heard the news of the battle of Lexington. Like Cincinnatus of old, he left it in the furrow, and repaired at once to Cambridge, though now more than sixty years of age. After consulting with the leading characters at the camp, he returned to Connecticut, to organize a regiment, with which he appeared shortly after at headquarters, as brigadier-general.

Putnam was athletic and active in person; energetic even to coarseness, but keen and pointed in conversation; and his face, though deeply furrowed by the savage tomahawk, as well as by the finger of time, was always radiant with a broad good-humor, which rendered

him the idol of the army. He was particularly earnest, in the Council of War, in recommending the measure, of fortifying Bunker's Hill; a part of his regiment was detached for the service, and he was present and active himself, on the field, through the night before the battle, and during the action. Whether, as some suppose, he was charged by the Council of War with a general superintendence of the whole affair; or whether, like Warren, he appeared upon the field as a volunteer, is not now known with certainty; for the official record of the orders of the day is lost; and the want of it is not supplied, for this purpose, by any other evidence. It is certain, however, from all the accounts, that his agency in the action was great and effectual.

CHAPTER VI.

Strength and Disposition of the British Troops.—The Americans occupy the Heights of Charlestown.

SUCH were the composition of the New England army, and the character of some of the prominent officers. The British army, which they were to encounter, was quartered within the limits of Boston. It consisted, at the time of the battle of Lexington, of about four thousand men; but, before the end of May, large reinforcements arrived, which raised the number to about ten thousand. On the 14th of May, General Gage, who had recently superseded Hutchinson in the government of the colony, arrived from New York. He had served with honor in Europe and America, had married an American lady, and, in other times, would have possessed a great personal popularity. The troops were the flower of the British army, and the officers were generally men of distinguished merit. Among the principal, were Generals Howe, Clinton, Burgoyne, Pigot, Grant, and

Robertson. Earl Percy and Lord Rawdon, afterwards Earl of Moira and Marquis of Hastings, had each of them a command. Earl Percy and his hardy Northumbrians took a pride in braving the severity of the climate in an encampment on the Common; and, to secure themselves from the cold, made use of double tents, having the space between them stuffed with hay. The light-infantry were encamped on the heights of West Boston, then called Beacon Hill. There was a squadron of cavalry, for whose use the Old South Church had been appropriated as a place of exercise. A strong battery for cannon and mortars had been thrown up on Copp's Hill, opposite to Charlestown; and this point was the post of observation of the British commander and his staff, during the action of the 17th of June. A strongly fortified line had been drawn across the Neck, at the southern entrance of the town from Roxbury. There was also a battery at the northern extremity of the town, and others on the Common, on Fort Hill, and on the shore opposite to Cambridge.

The British troops were in the highest state of equipment and discipline, and were amply furnished with every description of necessary stores and ammunition. In these respects, their condition formed a complete contrast to that of the Americans. To aid them in their operations, they had several ships of war stationed in the waters around the peninsula. The *Glasgow* lay in Charles River, not far from the present position of Craigie's Bridge, and enfiladed with her battery the isthmus that connects Charlestown with the continent. The *Somerset*, the *Lively*, and the *Falcon*, were stationed in the channel between Boston and Charlestown, and during the action of the 17th of June, pointed their guns directly at the American works.

It may be remarked, that the principal British and American officers were personally known to each other. They had served together in the French wars, and in some instances, had contracted a close and intimate friendship. Not long after the battle of Lexington, there was an interview at Charlestown, between some of the officers on both sides, to regulate an exchange of prisoners; and

Governor Brooks, who was present, was accustomed to relate, that General Putnam and Major Small, of the British army, no sooner met, than they ran into each other's arms.

In this state of the hostile preparations of the two parties, and with the strong feeling of mutual exasperation, which, notwithstanding occasional instances of a different character, prevailed generally between the masses of both, it was apparent, that a trial of strength on a more extensive scale, and of a much more serious and decisive kind, than any that had yet occurred, must soon take place. In this, as in other cases of a similar description, accidental causes would naturally regulate, in some degree, the time, place, and other circumstances, under which the trial should be made. The concentration of the New England troops around the peninsula of Boston would, of course, suggest to the British commander, if he intended to retain that position, the importance of occupying the neighboring heights of Dorchester and Charlestown. He had accordingly determined upon this measure, and was making his arrangements for taking possession of Dorchester Heights, now South Boston, on the 13th of June.

Information of these intentions and arrangements had been conveyed to the American army, and had become the subject of frequent and serious discussion in the Council of War and the Committee of Safety. It was proposed, on one side, to anticipate this movement of the British, by a corresponding one of our own, and to occupy the heights of Charlestown at once. The troops were full of zeal, and eager for action. It was thought wise to take advantage of this disposition, while it still existed in all its freshness, unimpaired by the weariness that would soon be created by absence from home, and the privations and hardships of military life. It was also necessary, that the attempt, if made at all, should be made immediately; for, if the British were permitted to intrench themselves in these positions, it would be impossible to dislodge them, and all hope of recovering Boston must be given up.

It was urged, on the other hand, that the attempt to occupy the heights of Charlestown would, of course, be resisted by the British; and, if sustained, would bring on a general engagement, for which the army was entirely unprepared, from a want of ammunition. There were, at that time, only eleven barrels of powder in the camp, and only sixty-seven within the State of Massachusetts. It is remarkable, that the more decisive, not to say rash, course, was recommended, on this occasion, by the veterans of the council, Prescott and Putnam; while the part of prudence was sustained by the young and ardent Warren. The result evinced the correctness of his views. The attempt failed, as had been anticipated, precisely for want of powder. Strict prudence might, perhaps, have counselled the delay, or rather abandonment, of the enterprise; for, if not attempted at once, it could not, as was intimated above, be attempted at all.

But it may be said, on the other hand, that strict prudence would hardly have lent her sanction to any of the proceedings of the Revolution, from first to last. It was throughout, in all its parts, an effort of noble and generous feeling, made in defiance of cool calculation; and the result furnishes one among the numerous instances to be found in the history of the world, in which such attempts have been crowned with success. Almost all the great political and moral revolutions have been the triumph of truth and justice over an overwhelming superiority of mere material force.

The feeling, that predominated in the Council of War and the Committee of Safety, was the same that prevailed in the army and throughout the country. It called for immediate action. Colonels Gridley and Henshaw, accompanied by Mr. Devens, had already, by direction of General Ward, surveyed the country, and pointed out Prospect, Bunker's and Breed's Hills, as the points proper to be occupied. On the 15th of June, it was accordingly voted in the Committee of Safety, which, as has been remarked, constituted the real executive power, to recommend to the Council of War to occupy and

fortify Bunker's Hill at once, and Dorchester Heights as soon as might be practicable.

The Council of War proceeded in conformity with this suggestion; and, on the following day, the 16th of June, General Ward, under their direction, issued orders to Colonel Prescott, to proceed to Charlestown, and to occupy and fortify Bunker's Hill. He was directed to take with him, upon this expedition, his own regiment, and those of Colonels Bridge and Frye; a hundred and twelve men from that of General Putnam, and Captain Gridley's company of artillery, with two fieldpieces. Colonel Frye being absent on other duty, his regiment was commanded at the time by Lieutenant-Colonel Brickett; but the Colonel, as I shall have occasion to mention, joined it in the course of the action.

The whole corps amounted to about a thousand men. They were ordered to take with them provisions for one day; and reenforcements, with additional provisions, were to be sent, if they should be found necessary. The detachment was mustered, early in the evening of the 16th, on Cambridge Common, near the Colleges, on which the main body of the army had been quartered. Religious service was performed by President Langdon; after which the troops took up the line of march. Colonel Prescott led the way, attired in his calico frock, preceded by two sergeants with dark lanterns, and accompanied by Colonel Gridley and Judge Winthrop, of Cambridge. Brooks, then a major in Bridge's regiment, joined him at the Neck.

For the information of those, who are unacquainted with the geography of the neighborhood of Boston, it may be proper to say, that Charlestown is a peninsula, about a mile long, and half a mile wide at the broadest part, where it is separated from Boston by a narrow channel; that it diminishes gradually in breadth from this part, until it terminates in a neck a hundred and thirty yards over, which connects it with the continent; and that it rises from the channel, and from the banks of the rivers Mystic and Charles, into a height of land composed of two eminences, denominated Bunker's and Breed's Hills.

At the time of the battle, the latter name was less known, and that of Bunker's Hill was popularly applied to the whole height of land.

When the troops had reached the ground, and were preparing to execute their orders, the question arose, which of the two hills was intended as Bunker's Hill, and was, of course, the one to be fortified. The northern eminence was more generally spoken of under that name; while the southern, commonly called Breed's Hill, was evidently the one best fitted for the purpose. A good deal of time was consumed in discussing this question; but it was at length determined to construct the principal work on Breed's Hill, and to erect an additional and subsidiary one on Bunker's Hill. Colonel Gridley accordingly proceeded to lay out the principal work. He placed a redoubt eight rods square on the summit of the hill, with the strongest side secured by projecting angles, looking towards Charlestown, and with an open entrance from the north, on the other side. From the northeastern corner of the redoubt he ran a breastwork, on a line with its side, to a marsh, which lay between the hill and the bank of the river. There was an opening, or sallyport, secured by a blind, between the redoubt and the breastwork. So much time had been lost in discussing the question where the works should be placed, that it was midnight before a spade entered the ground, and there remained less than four hours before daylight, when the operations would, of course, be seen by the British. The men, however, went to work with alacrity.

In the mean time a strong guard, under Captain Manners, was stationed on the Charlestown shore, to observe the enemy. The day had been fair, and it was a clear, starlight night. Colonel Prescott, accompanied by Major Brooks, went down twice to the shore, to reconnoiter, and distinctly heard the British sentries relieving guard, and uttering, as they walked their rounds, the customary, but, in this instance, deceptive cry, *All's well*.

It may be remarked here, that Major Brooks, who

was so conspicuous and useful through the day, was not at Cambridge when the detachment was ordered to march. He had appeared as a major in Bridge's regiment of militia, at the battle of Lexington, and received, soon after, a similar rank in the line. On the day preceding the battle, he was at home, at Medford, on account of illness in his family; but, hearing that his regiment was ordered on duty, he voluntarily repaired to his post, and, as has been remarked, joined his companions on their way at Charlestown Neck.

CHAPTER VII.

Commencement of the Action of the 17th of June.—The British open their Batteries upon the American Works.—The Americans send for Reenforcements, and are joined by the New Hampshire Troops, under Colonels Stark and Reed.

THE American troops continued their work unmolested until daylight, when they were discovered by the British. A heavy fire was immediately opened upon them, from the battery on Copp's Hill, and from the ships in the river. It continued for some time without effect; until, at length, Asa Pollard, of Billerica, a private soldier, who had ventured without the works, was struck by a ball and killed on the spot. Such were the circumstances under which the first blood was shed.

Not long after the British had opened their fire, some of the American officers, perceiving that the men were fatigued with the labors of the night, proposed to Colonel Prescott, that they should be relieved by another detachment. The Colonel immediately assembled a Council of War, in which the same proposition was renewed. Prescott, however, strenuously opposed it. The enemy, he thought, would not venture to attack; if they did, they

would be repulsed; the men who raised the works were best able to defend them; they had the merit of the labor, and ought to have the honor of the victory. The proposition to send for relief was rejected.

At about nine o'clock, movements were observed among the British troops in Boston, indicating the intention to attack; the men were now exhausted by fatigue and want of refreshment; the proposition to send for relief was renewed. Prescott again assembled a Council, but still discountenanced the proposed plan, which was again rejected. It was thought expedient, however, to send immediately for reenforcements and provisions; and Major Brooks was ordered to proceed to Cambridge, and apply to General Ward for this purpose. For greater expedition, he was directed to take one of the horses belonging to Captain Gridley's company of artillery. To this proposal the Captain demurred. Our fathers, as we shall presently see in another instance, seem, on this eventful day, to have been more anxious for the safety of their horses, than they were for their own. Captain Gridley's scruples prevailed, and Major Brooks was ordered to proceed, as rapidly as he could, on foot. He arrived at Cambridge at about ten o'clock, and delivered his message to General Ward.

The General hesitated about the propriety of sending reenforcements to Charlestown. He feared that the enemy might seize the occasion to make an attempt upon the public stores at Cambridge and Watertown; and thought it hardly prudent to leave them unprotected. The Committee of Safety, who were then in session at headquarters, were consulted upon the subject; and in this body there was also a difference of opinion. Mr. Devens, of Charlestown, who was a member of the Committee, influenced perhaps in some degree by local feeling, urged very strongly the necessity of sending a large reenforcement; and his opinion so far prevailed, that General Ward despatched orders to Colonels Stark and Reed, who were stationed, as has been remarked, at Medford, with the New Hampshire troops, to join Colonel Prescott.

Without intending to impute the slightest blame to General Ward, or to the Committee of Safety, whose conduct, through the whole affair, is above all praise, it may be conjectured, that if they had perceived at the moment more distinctly the importance of sending reinforcements, and especially ammunition, the fortune of the day might perhaps have been different. Had the Americans been supplied with powder enough to meet the enemy on the third attack, as they did on the two first, it is hardly probable that the British would have returned a fourth time to the charge.

Stark and Reed received their orders at about eleven o'clock, and having supplied their men with powder and ball, an affair which, from the total want of preparation, occupied two hours, they took up the line of march at about one. When they reached Charlestown Neck they found the entrance occupied by one or two regiments, who had been stationed there the day before, but had not yet received orders to march. M'Clary, the major of Stark's regiment, rode forward, by his order, and requested the colonels of these regiments, if they did not intend to proceed, to open to the right and left, and let the New Hampshire troops pass through, which they did.

The troops were marching to slow time, and the Neck, as has been said, was enfiladed by the fire of the *Glasgow*. "My company being in front," says General, then Captain, Dearborn, in his account of the battle, "and I, of course, marching by the side of Stark, I suggested to him the propriety of quickening our pace, that we might relieve the men the sooner from the enemy's fire. 'Dearborn,' he replied, 'one fresh man, in action, is worth a dozen fatigued ones.'" The march proceeded in slow time.

Stark, like Prescott, Putnam, and Gridley, was a veteran of the French wars. He had served as a captain of rangers, with the highest distinction; had fought with Wolfe, at Quebec; had been received, after the war, into the British service; and, like Gridley, had sacrificed rank and pay in the cause. Major M'Clary was, likewise, an officer of great repute.

The New Hampshire troops arrived upon the field at

about two o'clock. In the mean time, the American lines had been extended on the left, where advantage had been taken of a fence, composed of stone, surmounted by wooden rails, which ran about two hundred yards in the rear of the breastwork, from the hill to the bank of Mystic River. A little in front of this fence, the troops formed another, of a similar kind, out of the other fences in the neighborhood; and, by filling up the space between the two with the hay which was lying upon the field, constructed an imperfect substitute for a regular breastwork. Between the south end of the rail fence and the north end of the breastwork, there was an opening of about two hundred yards, which was entirely unprotected by any work whatever. This was the weak point in the American defences, and the one through which the British finally poured in the raking fire from their artillery, which compelled the Americans to leave the redoubt.

General Putnam had posted his company of Connecticut troops, under Captain Knowlton, at the rail fence; and, when the New Hampshire troops came upon the field, he was employed, with a part of the original detachment, in throwing up a second, subsidiary work upon the northern eminence, properly called Bunker's Hill, in distinction from Breed's, which he seems to have regarded as a very important part of the operations of the day. He retained a portion of the New Hampshire troops to aid him at this point, and advised the rest to post themselves, with the Connecticut troops, at the rail fence. Stark accordingly took that course. Having encouraged his men by a short address, and ordered them to give three cheers, he put them at last into quick time, and marched up rapidly to the lines.

These were the principal reenforcements, that came upon the field in season to be of any use. At about one o'clock, when it had become apparent that the British intended to attack the works, General Ward ordered all the troops at Cambridge, with the exception of five regiments, to reenforce those which were engaged; but it was now so late in the day, that this order produced

but little effect. Most of the troops did not reach the ground; and those that did, came too late to be of much service.

The disposition of the American troops at the opening of the action was, therefore, as follows. Colonel Prescott, with Colonel Bridge, Lieutenant-Colonel Brickett, and the greater part of the original detachment of a thousand men, were in the redoubt and at the breastwork. Captain Gridley, with his company of artillery and two fieldpieces, and Captain Callender, with another of the same force, were at the opening between the redoubt and the breastwork. Colonels Stark and Reed, with the New Hampshire troops, and Captain Knowlton, with the Connecticut company, were at the rail fence on the left. Captain Manners, with the troops that had been stationed on the Charlestown shore in the morning, were at another rail fence, which had been formed on the right, between the redoubt and the road. General Putnam, who was on horseback, superintended the work on Bunker's Hill, whence he rode, as occasion required, to the rail fence, and once or twice in the course of the morning to headquarters at Cambridge.

Pomroy, who, as has been said, held no commission in the line, when he heard the artillery, felt it as a summons to action, and could not resist the inclination to repair to the field. He accordingly requested General Ward to lend him a horse, and, taking his musket, set off at full speed for Charlestown. On reaching the Neck, and finding it enfiladed by a hot and heavy fire of round, bar, and chain shot, from the *Glasgow*, he began to be alarmed; not, as may well be supposed, for his own safety, but for that of General Ward's horse. Horses, as has been already remarked, were at this time almost as rare and precious as the nobler animals that rode them. Too honest to expose his borrowed horse to "the pelting of this pitiless storm," and too bold to dream for a moment of shrinking from it himself, the conqueror of Baron Dieskau dismounted, delivered the horse to a sentry, shouldered his musket, and marched on foot across the Neck. On reaching the hill, he took

his station at the rail fence. His person was known to the soldiers, and the name of Pomroy rang with shouts along the line.

CHAPTER VIII.

Progress of the Action.—A Detachment of British Troops lands at Charlestown.—View of the two Peninsulas and the neighboring Country.—General Warren comes upon the Field.

WHILE the Americans were employed in fortifying the heights of Charlestown, and in preparing to defend them against the enemy, the British, on their part, were not less busily engaged in preparations for attack. At daybreak, when the movements of the Americans were first discovered, a fire was opened upon them from all the batteries, which was continued, but without doing much execution, through the day.

At an early hour in the morning, Governor Gage summoned a council of war, at the building now called the City Hall. They were all, of course, agreed as to the propriety of dislodging the Americans, but there was some difference of opinion upon the mode of making the attack. Generals Clinton and Grant were for landing at Charlestown Neck, and taking the works in the rear; but this plan was considered by the Governor as too hazardous. It would place the British between two armies, one superior in force, and the other strongly intrenched, by which they might be attacked at once in front and rear, without the possibility of a retreat. The plan preferred by the council was to attack the works in front.

Accordingly, at about noon, twenty-eight barges left the end of Long Wharf, filled with the principal part of the first detachment of the British troops, which consisted of four battalions of infantry, ten companies of light-infantry, and ten of grenadiers. They had six pieces of

artillery, one of which was placed in each of the six leading boats. The barges formed in single file, and in two parallel lines. The day was without a cloud, and the regular movement of this splendid naval procession, with the glow of the brazen artillery and the scarlet dresses and burnished arms of the troops, exhibited to the unaccustomed eyes of the Americans a brilliant and imposing spectacle. The barges proceeded in good order, and landed their freight at the southeastern point of the peninsula, commonly called Morton's Point.

Immediately after they had landed, it was discovered, that most of the cannon-balls, which had been brought over, were too large for the pieces, and that it was necessary to send them back, and obtain a fresh supply. "This wretched blunder of oversized balls," says a British writer of the day, "arose from the dotage of an officer of high rank, who spends all his time with the school-master's daughters." It seems, that General Cleveland, "who," as the same author says, "though no Samson, must have his Delilah," was enamored of the beautiful daughter of Master Lovel, and, in order to win favor with the damsel, had given her young brother an appointment in the ordnance department, for which he was not qualified. The accident, to whatever cause it may have been owing, created delay, and somewhat diminished the British fire during the first two attacks.

While the British commander was preparing and sending off his second detachment, the first remained unmolested at Morton's Point, and quietly dined, most of the men for the last time, from the contents of their knapsacks. At about two o'clock, the second detachment left Winnisimmet Ferry in the barges, and joined the first at Morton's Point; soon after which the reenforcements, consisting of a few companies of grenadiers and light-infantry, the forty-seventh battalion of infantry, and a battalion of marines, landed at Madlin's shipyard, now the Navy Yard, near the east end of Breed's Hill. The detachment consisted altogether of about four thousand men, and was commanded by General Howe. He had under him General Pigot, and Colonels Nesbit, Abercrombie, and Clark.

Such were the respective forces and positions of the two armies at the moment immediately preceding the battle. The spectacle, which was exhibited at this time by the two peninsulas and the surrounding waters and country, must have been of a highly varied and brilliant character. General Burgoyne, in a letter written two or three days after the battle, has given a spirited sketch of this splendid panorama, as seen by the British officers from the heights at the northern extremity of Boston. Immediately below them flowed the river Charles, not, as now, interrupted by numerous bridges, but pursuing a smooth, unbroken way to the ocean. Between them and the Charlestown shore, lay at anchor the ships of war the *Somerset*, the *Lively*, and the *Falcon*; and farther on the left, within the bay, the *Glasgow*. Their black and threatening hulks poured forth at every new discharge fresh volumes of smoke, which hung like fleecy clouds upon the air.

From time to time, as the veil of smoke was cleared away by the wind, the spectator could see, upon the opposite side of the river, rising from the shore by a gentle ascent, the sister hills of Charlestown, clothed in the green luxuriance of the first flush of vegetation, excepting where their summits were broken by the low and hasty works of the Americans. Behind these scanty defences could be seen our gallant fathers, swarming to the rescue of freedom and their country. Their homely apparel had but little to attract the eye, but now and then, when some favorite officer made his appearance, a shout of gratulation passed along their ranks, which showed the zeal that inspired them for the cause. Below the hill, the flourishing village of Charlestown extended its white dwellings, interspersed with trees and gardens, along the shore; and farther to the right, the British troops spread forth their long and brilliant lines.

While both the armies, and the assembled multitude, were hushed in breathless expectation, awaiting eagerly the signal for the action, a horseman was seen advancing from Charlestown Neck at full speed towards the American works. As he crossed Bunker's Hill, General

Putnam, who was there, and also on horseback, rode forward to meet him, and recognised General Warren. "General Warren!" exclaimed the veteran, "is it you? I rejoice and regret to see you. Your life is too precious to be exposed in this battle; but, since you are here, I take your orders." "General Putnam, I have none to give. You have made your arrangements. I come to aid you as a volunteer. Tell me where I can be useful." "Go then," said Putnam, "to the redoubt; you will there be covered." "I came not to be covered," replied Warren; "tell me where I shall be most in danger; tell me where the action will be hottest." "The redoubt," said Putnam, "will be the enemy's object. If that can be defended, the day is ours." General Warren pursued his way to the redoubt. As he came in view of the troops, they recognised his person, though he wore no uniform, and welcomed him with loud acclamations. When he reached the redoubt, Colonel Prescott offered to take his orders. "No, Colonel Prescott," he replied, "give me yours; give me a musket. I have come to take a lesson of a veteran soldier in the art of war."

These particulars, including the dialogue, are given substantially as reported afterwards by General Putnam and Colonel Prescott, and may be depended on as authentic. Warren, as has been already intimated, was originally opposed to the plan of fortifying the heights of Charlestown; but, when the majority of the Council of War had decided in favor of it, he told them, that he should personally take a part in carrying it into effect. He was strongly urged not to do so, but his resolution was immovable.

On the day preceding the battle, he officiated as President of the Congress, which was in session at Wattertown; and had passed the night in transacting business. At daylight he rode to headquarters at Cambridge, where he arrived, suffering severely with headache, and retired soon after to take some repose. When information was received that the British were moving, General Ward sent to give him notice. He rose immediately, declared that his headache was gone, and attended the

meeting of the Committee of Safety, of which he was chairman. At this meeting Elbridge Gerry, who entertained the same opinion with Warren upon the prudence of the attempt, earnestly requested him not to expose his person. "I am aware of the danger," replied the young hero, "but I should die with shame, if I were to remain at home in safety, while my friends and fellow-citizens are shedding their blood and hazarding their lives in the cause." "Your ardent temper," replied Gerry, "will carry you forward into the midst of peril and you will probably fall." "I know that I may fall," returned Warren; "but where is the man who does not think it glorious and delightful to die for his country?"

'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.'

Such, as reported by the friends who heard it, was the language of Warren, in the Committee of Safety, on the morning of the 17th of June. After the adjournment of the Committee, he mounted his horse, and rode to Charlestown, where he arrived with the reinforcements a short time only before the commencement of the battle.

CHAPTER IX.

General Howe attempts to storm the American Works.—He is repulsed with great Loss.—Ill Conduct of the American Artillery.—Gridley.—Gerrish.—Callender.

THE plan of attack determined on in the British council of war, as has been already remarked, was to land in front of the works, and attempt to carry them by storm.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon, the force intended for the service being all in position, and every necessary preparation made, the signal was given for action, by a general discharge of artillery along the whole British line. The troops advanced in two divisions. General

Howe, in person, led the right, towards the rail fence; General Pigot, with the left, aimed directly at the redoubt.

It would seem, that the order for a fresh supply of balls, had not yet been answered; as the fire of the British artillery is represented as having been suspended soon after it commenced, because those on hand were too large. It was, however, renewed immediately with grape shot. The little battery, which was stationed at the opening between the redoubt and breastwork, in the American lines, replied with effect. In the mean time, the American drums beat to arms. General Putnam, who was still at work on Bunker's Hill, quitted his intrenchment, and led his men into action. "Powder is scarce," said the veteran, addressing them in his usual pointed and laconic style; "powder is scarce, and must not be wasted. Reserve your fire till you see the whites of their eyes. Then take aim at the officers."

The substance of these remarks was repeated as an order along the line; but when the British had come within gunshot of the works, a few sharp-shooters disobeyed the injunction, and fired. "Fire again before the word is given at your peril," exclaimed Prescott; "the next man that disobeys orders shall be instantly shot." Lieutenant-Colonel Robinson, who, with Colonel Buttrick, had led the troops so gallantly at Concord, on the 19th of April, ran round the top of the parapet, and threw up the muskets. At length the British were at only eight rods' distance. "Now, men! now is your time!" said Prescott. "Make ready! take aim! fire!"

So effectually was the order obeyed, that, when the smoke cleared away, the whole hill side was covered, as it were, with the fallen. The British returned the fire; they attempted to rally and advance, but without success. After a moment's irresolution, they turned their backs, and hurried from the hill.

Such was the issue of the first attempt to storm the works. It was, in all respects, auspicious for the future fortunes of the day; and it may be safely said, that the timely arrival, at this moment, of the reenforcements of

artillery and supplies of ammunition, which had been ordered from Cambridge, would have insured the most brilliant success. It was now, that the practical mischief, resulting from Colonel Gridley's ill-judged exhibition of parental partiality, in giving the place of major in the artillery to his own son, in preference to Count Rumford, was severely felt.

Major Gridley, as his subsequent conduct proved, was entirely incompetent to the duty assigned him. Could the thorough science, with the vigorous and energetic character of Rumford, have been employed in doing justice to the orders of the veteran conqueror of Louisburg, there would, in all probability, have been no want of ammunition; powder enough would, in one way or another, have found its way into the works, and the day might still have been ours. But it was the fortune of America, on this occasion, to pay the penalty of Colonel Gridley's fatherly weakness, as Great Britain did, though to a less disastrous extent, that of General Cleveland's superannuated gallantry.

The American artillery was badly served through the whole action. Early in the day, Captain Callender, who, as has been said, was stationed with his company and two fieldpieces at the opening between the redoubt and breastwork, drew off his pieces from the post assigned him, to Bunker's Hill, in order, as he said, that he might prepare his ammunition in safety. General Putnam attempted in vain to induce him to return, and was finally obliged to employ Captain Ford, who was crossing the hill with his company of infantry, and knew nothing of the artillery service, to drag the pieces back. By him, and by Captain Perkins of Boston, who was also stationed at the opening between the redoubt and the breastwork, they were served through the day.

Major Gridley had been ordered to proceed with his battalion from Cambridge to the lines; but had advanced only a few yards beyond the Neck, when he made a halt, determined, as he said, to wait and cover the retreat, which he deemed inevitable. At that moment, Colonel Frye, a veteran of the old French wars, whose regiment

was in the redoubt, but who, being on other duty, as was remarked before, had not yet joined it, was riding toward the hill, and perceived Major Gridley with his artillery in the position which I have described. Frye galloped up to him, and demanded what it meant. "We are waiting," said Gridley, "to cover the retreat." "Retreat?" replied the veteran; "who talks of retreating? This day, thirty years ago, I was present at the first taking of Louisburg, when your father, with his own hand, lodged a shell in the citadel. His son was not born to talk of retreating. Forward to the lines!"

Gridley proceeded a short distance with his artillery; but, overcome with terror, and unequal to the horrors of the scene, he ordered his men to recross the Neck, and take a position on Cobble Hill, where they were to fire with their three-pounders upon the *Glasgow*. The order was so absurd, that Captain Trevett refused to obey it, and proceeded with his two pieces. He lost one of them by a cannon-shot on Bunker's Hill; the other he brought to the lines. This little fragment of Major Gridley's battalion was the only reenforcement of artillery that came into action.

Colonel Gerrish, with his regiment of infantry, reached the top of Bunker's Hill, on his way to the lines; but there his courage failed. He had served with distinction as a captain in the provincial army of 1756, but had now become unwieldy from excessive corpulence. On reaching the top of Bunker's Hill, he declared that he could not go a step farther, and threw himself prostrate upon the ground. Putnam, who was on the hill, attempted in vain to induce him to proceed. His men, discouraged, probably, by the conduct of their commander, were equally indisposed for action. "They could not proceed without their officers." Putnam offered to lead them himself. "The cannon were abandoned, and there was no chance without artillery." In short, the service of the regiment was entirely lost.

Gerrish, by some unaccountable accident, was not only not tried for his conduct on this occasion, but was even employed after the battle upon another service, in

which his behavior was not much better. He was then brought to a court-martial for his delinquency in both the actions, convicted of conduct unworthy of an officer, and cashiered.

Major Gridley was tried for neglect of duty, and dismissed from the service.

Captain Callender was also brought to a court-martial, convicted of cowardice, and dismissed from the service; but he determined to clear away the stain upon his character in the most honorable manner. He continued with the army as a volunteer, and exposed himself desperately in every action. Finally, at the battle of Long Island, after the captain and lieutenant of the artillery company in which he served as a private had been shot, he assumed the command, and, refusing to retreat, fought his pieces till the enemy were just upon him, when a British officer, admiring his intrepidity, interfered, and saved his life. He continued in the service till the end of the war, and sustained the character of a brave and energetic officer.*

CHAPTER X.

Conflagration of Charlestown.—General Howe attempts a second Time to storm the American Works.—He is again repulsed with great Loss.—Anecdote of General Putnam and Major Small, of the British Army.

AFTER the repulse of the British troops in their first attack upon the works, an ominous pause, like the lull that sometimes interrupts the wildest tempest, prevailed upon the scene of action, only broken by the occasional discharges of artillery from the ships and batteries. It was not, however, of long duration. General Howe determined, at once, upon a second attack; and, having

* See *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III. p. 490.

rallied and reorganized his men, gave the order to advance. With unshaken intrepidity they proceeded through the long grass, under the heat of a blazing summer sun, loaded with knapsacks of more than a hundred pounds each, towards the lines. The artillery pushed forward, to within three hundred yards of the rail fence, and opened their battery to prepare the way for the infantry. In the mean time, a deep silence brooded over the American lines. The men were ordered to reserve their fire till the enemy should be within six rods' distance.

While the troops were thus advancing, a new spectacle burst suddenly upon the eyes of the assembled multitude, and added another feature, more startling, if possible, than the rest, to the terrible sublimity of the scene. Clouds of smoke were seen to overspread the air, from which sheets of fire flashed forth in all directions, and it soon became apparent that Charlestown was in flames. The British general had been annoyed, at his first attack upon the works, by the fire of a detachment stationed in the town, and had given orders that it should be burned. For this purpose, combustibles were hurled into it from Boston, which commenced the conflagration; and a detachment of marines, from the *Somerset*, were directed to land and aid in giving it effect. The flames spread with great rapidity through the town, devouring, with unrelenting fury, house on house, and street on street. At length the large church took fire.

As the flames ascended from the body of the building along the lofty spire, it exhibited a curious and splendid spectacle. When they reached the steeple, the beams that suspended the bell were pretty soon burned off, and the bell itself fell to the ground, ringing continuously with a strange and startling alarm, which was heard distinctly through the noise of crackling flames and crashing edifices.

Unmoved by scenes like these, which, in ordinary times, would drive the dullest souls to desperation, the armies coolly prosecuted their work. The British troops ascended the hill by slow and regular approaches, firing in platoons with all the precision of a holiday review,

and though without aim, not entirely without effect. Colonels Brewer and Nixon were carried off wounded. Colonel Buckminster was crippled for life, by a ball through the shoulder. Major Moore was shot through the thigh. While his men were carrying him from the field, he received another wound in the body, which afterwards proved mortal. He called for water, but none could now be obtained short of the Neck, and two of his men set forth to get it for him.

In the mean time, the Americans, agreeably to their orders, reserved their fire till the British were at six rods' distance. The word was then given, and the discharge took place with still more fatal effect than in the former attack. Hundreds of men, including a large proportion of the best officers, were prostrated by it. General Howe remained almost alone. Nearly every officer of his staff was killed or wounded by his side, and among them his aids, Colonels Gordon, Balfour, and Addison; the last belonging to the family of the author of the 'Spectator.' So tremendous was the havoc, that it was found impossible to pursue the attack; and, for the second time on this eventful day, the order was given for the British army to retreat from the hill.

At this period in the progress of the battle, a little incident occurred, in which General Putnam, and Major Small of the British army, were the parties concerned, and which throws over the various horrors of the scene a momentary gleam of kindness and chivalry. It has already been remarked, that these two officers were personally known to each other, and had, in fact, while serving together in the former wars, against the French, contracted a close friendship. After the fire from the American works had taken effect, Major Small, like his commander, remained almost alone upon the field. His companions in arms had been all swept away, and, standing thus apart, he became immediately, from the brilliancy of his dress, a conspicuous mark for the Americans within the redoubt. They had already pointed their unerring rifles at his heart, and the delay of another minute would, probably, have stopped its pulses for ever.

At this moment, General Putnam recognised his friend, and perceiving the imminent danger in which he was placed, sprang upon the parapet, and threw himself before the levelled rifles. "Spare that officer, my gallant comrades," said the noble-minded veteran; "we are friends; we are brothers; do you not remember how we rushed into each other's arms at the meeting for the exchange of prisoners?" This appeal, urged in the well known voice of a favorite old chief, was successful, and Small retired unmolested from the field.

The anecdote, though it wears a rather poetical aspect, is understood to rest upon the well-attested authority of both the parties, and may probably be relied on as substantially true. Its authenticity is, in fact, placed beyond a reasonable doubt by the connexion of the incident related with another of a similar kind, which occurred in the farther progress of the action and will be mentioned in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

Third Attack upon the American Works, which proves successful.—The Americans leave the Redoubt.—Death of Warren.

THE British general, undaunted by the new and fatal evidence, afforded by this second repulse, of the determination of the Americans to defend themselves to the last extremity, gave orders, at once, for a third attack. He was now, however, so far enlightened by the lessons he had received, as to adopt a more judicious plan than before. He concentrated his whole force upon the redoubt and breastwork, instead of directing a portion of it against the rail fence. He also directed his men to throw aside their knapsacks, reserve their fire, and trust wholly to the bayonet.

He had discovered the vulnerable point in the American defences, and pushed forward his artillery to the opening between the redoubt and breastwork, where it turned our works, and enfiladed the whole line. General Howe, as before, commanded on the right, and General Pigot on the left. General Clinton, who had seen from Copp's Hill the defeat of his countrymen, though not himself on duty, volunteered his services, and hastened to the rescue. His well known gallantry and talents inspired new confidence. He took his station with General Pigot, on the left.

In the mean time, the Americans were reduced to the last extremity. Their ammunition was exhausted; they had no bayonets; no reinforcements appeared. Colonel Gardiner, who had been stationed with his regiment at Charlestown Neck, but had received no orders to march, through the day, volunteered his services, and reached Bunker's Hill with three hundred men. Just as he was descending to the lines, he received a wound from a musket ball, which afterwards proved mortal.

As his men were carrying him from the field, his son, a youth of nineteen, second lieutenant in Trevett's artillery company, which had just come up, met and recognised his father. Distracted at seeing him in this condition, he offered to aid in conducting him from the field. "Think not of me," replied the father, with a spirit worthy of a Bayard, "think not of me. I am well. Go forward to your duty!" The son obeyed his orders, and the father retired from the field to die. He was a member of the General Court, from Cambridge, and one of the principal men of the colony. His regiment was broken by the loss of their leader, and only one company came into action. This was the Charlestown company, commanded by Captain Harris. It was the last to leave the field.

Their line enfiladed, without ammunition, without bayonets, the Americans awaited with desperate resolution the onset of the British; prepared to repel them, as they best might, with the few remaining charges of powder and ball, with the stocks of their muskets, and with

stones. Having reached the works, the foremost of the British attempted to scale them. Richardson, a private in the Royal Irish regiment, was the first to mount the parapet. He was shot down at once. Major Pitcairn followed him. As he stepped upon the parapet, he was heard to utter the exulting cry, "The day is ours!" But while the words were still upon his lips, he was shot through the body by a black soldier, named Salem. His son received him in his arms as he fell, and carried him from the hill. He led the detachment, which first encountered our troops upon Lexington Green, on the 19th of April, had a horse shot under him on that day, and was left upon the field for dead.

General Pigot, who had mounted the southeast corner of the redoubt, by the aid of a tree which had been left standing there, was the first person to enter the works. He was followed by his men. The Americans, however, still held out. Gridley received, at this time, a ball through the leg, and was carried from the field. Colonel Bridge, who had come with the first detachment the night before, remained till the last, and was twice severely wounded with a broadsword. Lieutenant Prescott, a nephew of the Colonel, was wounded in the arm, which hung broken and lifeless by his side. His uncle advised him to content himself with encouraging the men; but he continued to load his musket, and was passing through the sallyport, to point it at the enemy, when a cannonball cut him to pieces. Major Moore remained at the last extremity. His men, who had gone to the Neck for water, returned and offered to assist him, but he told them to provide for themselves, and leave him to his fate. Perceiving, at length, that further resistance would be only a wanton and useless sacrifice of valuable life, Colonel Prescott ordered a retreat. The Americans left the redoubt, and retired with little molestation from the hill.

General Warren had come upon the field, as he said, to learn the art of war from a veteran soldier. He had offered to take Colonel Prescott's orders; but his desperate courage would hardly permit him to obey the last.

It was not without extreme reluctance, at the very latest moment, that he quitted the redoubt; and he was slowly retreating from it, being still at a few rods' distance only, when the British had obtained full possession. His person was of course in imminent danger. At this critical moment, Major Small, whose life, as has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, had been saved in a similar emergency by the interference of General Putnam, attempted to requite the service by rendering one of a like character to Warren. He called out to him by name from the redoubt, and begged him to surrender, at the same time ordering the men around him to suspend their fire. Warren turned his head, as if he recognised the voice, but the effort was too late. While his face was directed toward the works, a ball struck him on the forehead, and inflicted a wound which was instantly fatal.

These particulars of the death of Warren are understood to rest on the authority of Major Small himself, and are believed to be authentic. His body was identified the following day, by General Isaac Winslow, of Boston, then a youth, and by various other visitors of the field, who had been familiar with his person. The bullet, which terminated his life, was taken from the body by Mr. Savage, an officer in the Custom House, and was carried by him to England. Several years afterwards, it was given by him, at London, to the Reverend Mr. Montague, of Dedham, Massachusetts, and is now in possession of his family. The remains of Warren were buried on the spot where he fell. The next year, they were removed to a tomb in the Tremont Cemetery, and were finally deposited in the family vault, under St. Paul's Church, in Boston.

General Howe, though slightly wounded in the foot, passed the night on the field of battle. The next morning, as he lay wrapped in his cloak upon a mound of hay, word was brought to him, that the body of Warren was found among the dead. Howe refused, at first, to credit the intelligence. It was impossible, that the President of Congress could have exposed his life in such a battle.

When assured of the fact, he declared that his death was a full offset for the loss of five hundred men.

The battle, which commenced at three o'clock, lasted about two hours. The number of Americans engaged is estimated at about three thousand five hundred. The loss was a hundred and fifteen killed and missing, three hundred and five wounded, and thirty taken prisoners. Prescott's regiment suffered more than any other; in that alone, there were forty-two killed, and twenty-eight wounded. The other regiments which composed the original detachment, and the New Hampshire troops, also suffered severely. Colonel Gardiner, Lieutenant-Colonel Parker, of Chelmsford, Major Moore and Major M'Clary, were the only officers, above the rank of captain, who fell in the battle.

The number of British troops engaged was estimated, as has been said, at about four thousand. Their loss was rated by the Massachusetts Congress, in their official account of the action, at fifteen hundred. Governor Gage, in his official account, acknowledges a loss of one thousand and fifty-four; two hundred and twenty-six killed, eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded, including nineteen officers killed, and twenty-eight wounded. Charlestown was entirely destroyed by the flames. After the battle, the British took possession of Bunker's Hill, from which they kept up a fire of artillery through the night. The Americans occupied Prospect and Winter Hills. It was apprehended, that the British would pursue their advantage, by making an attempt on the stores at Cambridge; but their loss was probably too severe. They intrenched themselves on Bunker's Hill, and the Americans resumed their former position.*

* For many facts in the preceding narrative, we have been indebted to Colonel Swett's valuable and interesting '*History of the Battle of Bunker's Hill*,' where the reader may find all the details of the action fully explained.

CHAPTER XII.

Resolutions of the Continental Congress in Honor of Warren.—His Wife and Family.—Concluding Reflections.

IN the official account of the battle of Bunker's Hill, by the Massachusetts Congress, the character of Warren is noticed in the most honorable terms. "Among the dead," says the account, "was Major-General Joseph Warren, a man, whose memory will be endeared to his countrymen and to the worthy in every part and age of the world, so long as virtue and valor are esteemed among mankind."

General Warren married, soon after his establishment in Boston, Elizabeth Hooton, the daughter of a respectable physician of that place. She died about six years afterward, leaving four children, two sons and two daughters. After the death of Mrs. Warren, the children were committed to the care of their paternal grandmother, with whom they remained until the marriage of Dr. John Warren, the youngest brother of the General. They were then taken home by him, and were considered afterwards as a part of his family.* Within a year after the death of Warren, it was resolved, by the Continental Congress, that his eldest son should be educated at the public expense; and two or three years later, it was further resolved, that public provision should be made for the education of the other children, until the youngest should be of age. The sons both died soon after they reached maturity. The daughters were distinguished for their amiable qualities and personal beauty. One of them

* The three younger children were for some time under the care of Miss Mercy Scollay, of Boston, to whose solicitude and kindness they were much indebted.—See SPARKS'S *Life and Treason of Benedict Arnold*, p. 126.

married the late General Arnold Welles, of Boston, and died without issue. The other married Richard Newcombe of Greenfield, Massachusetts. Their children are the only surviving descendants of the hero of Bunker's Hill.

In addition to the public provision made by the Congress for the children of Warren, it was also resolved by that body, that a monument should be erected, at the national expense, to his memory. This resolution, like the similar one in honor of Washington, remains, as yet, without effect. The duty imposed by it will, doubtless, be discharged by the piety and patriotism of some succeeding generation; but the noblest and most appropriate monument of both these great men, is, after all, to be found in the constantly increasing prosperity and power of their country.

Such are the only particulars of interest, that are now known, of the brief and brilliant career of Joseph Warren. Had it been his fortune to live out the usual term of human existence, he would probably have passed with distinction through a high career of usefulness and glory. His great powers, no longer limited to the sphere of a single province, would have directed the councils or led the armies of a vast confederate empire. We should have seen him, like his contemporaries and fellow-patriots, Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, sustaining the highest magistracies at home, or securing the rights and interests of the country, in her most important embassies, abroad; and, at length, in declining age, illuminating, like them, the whole social sphere, with the mild splendor of a long and peaceful retirement. This destiny was reserved for them,—for others.

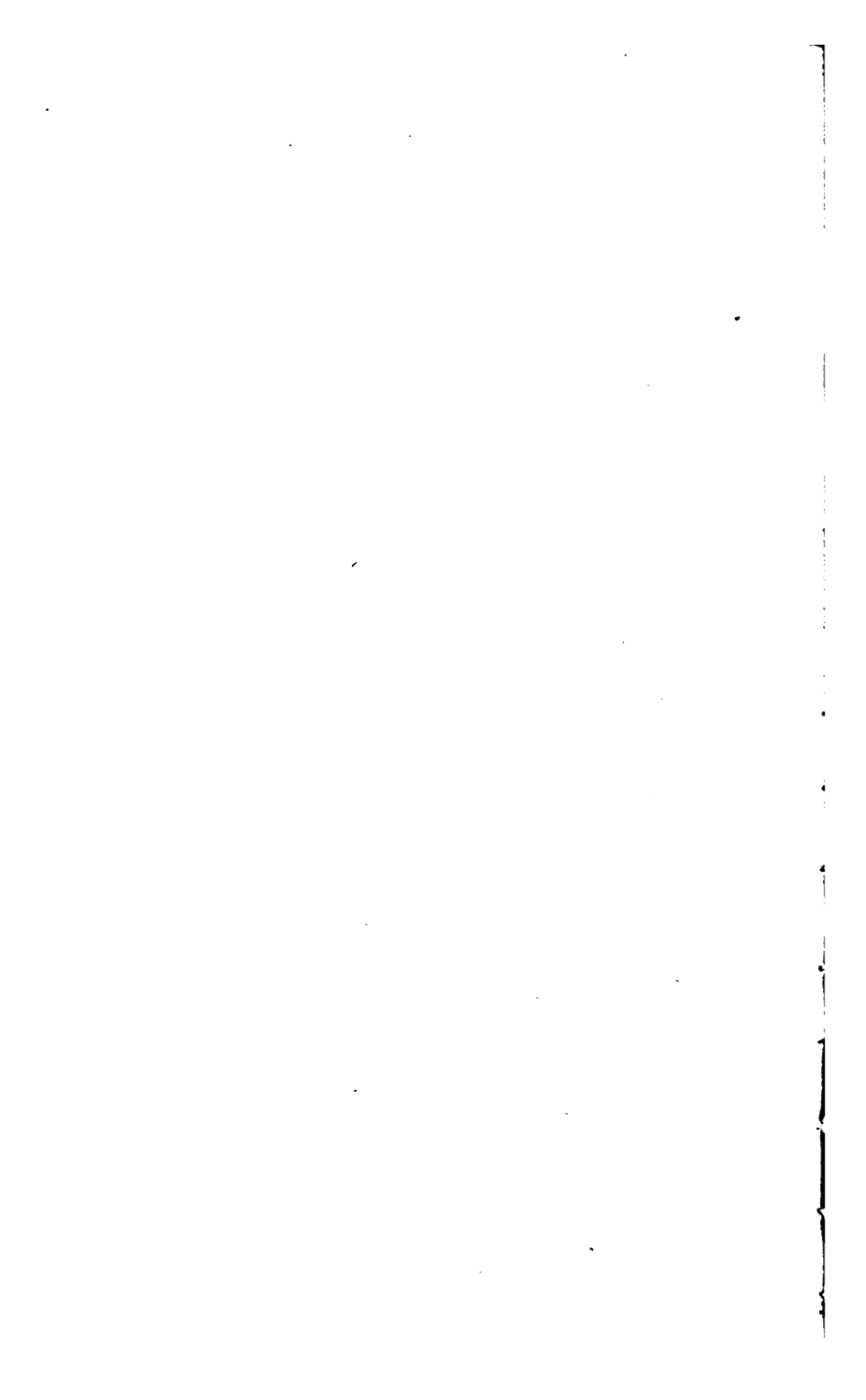
To Warren, distinguished as he was among the bravest, wisest, and best of the patriotic band, was assigned, in the inscrutable decrees of Providence, the crown of early martyrdom. It becomes not human frailty to murmur at the will of Heaven; and however painful may be the first emotions excited in the mind by the sudden and premature eclipse of so much talent and virtue, it may perhaps well be doubted, whether, by any course of ac-

tive service, in a civil or military department, General Warren could have rendered more essential benefit to the country, or to the cause of liberty throughout the world, than by the single act of heroic self-devotion, which closed his existence. The blood of martyrs has been, in all ages, the nourishing rain of religion and liberty.

There are many among the patriots and heroes of the revolutionary war, whose names are connected with a greater number of important transactions; whose biography, correspondence, and writings fill more pages; and whose names will occupy a larger space in general history; but there is hardly one whose example will exercise a more inspiring and elevating influence upon his countrymen and the world, than that of the brave, blooming, generous, self-devoted martyr of Bunker's Hill. The contemplation of such a character is the noblest spectacle which the moral world affords. It is declared by a poet to be a spectacle worthy of the gods. It awakens, with tenfold force, the purifying emotions of admiration and tenderness, which are represented as the legitimate objects of tragedy.

A death like that of Warren is, in fact, the most affecting and impressive catastrophe, that can ever occur, in the splendid tragedy, which is constantly going on around us,—far more imposing and interesting, for those who can enjoy it, than any of the mimic wonders of the drama,—the real action of life. The ennobling and softening influence of such events is not confined to contemporaries and countrymen. The friends of liberty, from all countries, and throughout all time, as they kneel upon the spot that was moistened by the blood of Warren, will find their better feelings strengthened by the influence of the place, and will gather from it a virtue in some degree allied to his own.

LIFE
OF
ISRAEL PUTNAM;
BY
OLIVER W. B. PEABODY.



ISRAEL PUTNAM.

CHAPTER I.

His Birth and Education.—Becomes a practical Farmer.—Singular Adventure in killing a Wolf.—Enters the Army a Captain of a Company of Rangers.—Engages in the War against the French and Indians on the Canada Frontiers.

OUR history, from its beginning until a comparatively recent time, gives us abundant instances of men, in whom the deficiencies of education have been supplied by natural resource and energy. Thrown into novel situations, where instruction and experience would sometimes have availed them little, they have yet accomplished all that any exigency could require. Some of them were called to lay the foundations of civil institutions in the wilderness; some to subdue a fierce and unrelenting savage foe; some to encounter the hostility of other nations, as well as of that which they regarded as their own. Privation and suffering, in every form in which they commonly exhaust the frame and overcome the spirit, were to attend them often by the fireside, and always in the engagements of life. These evils, if evils they were which led to immortality, were encountered with manly and heroic firmness; and it must needs be, that the personal history of men, exhibiting the vigor and flexibility of character required by the circumstances in which they were thus placed, should be full of freshness and diversity. Without pretending to claim for General Putnam the very highest rank among such individuals, we may yet venture to as-

sign him an honorable place. His biography has been already written by a friend and fellow-soldier, who gathered from his own lips a portion of his history;* and we shall freely avail ourselves of the materials, which have been thus collected, in connexion with such as have been gained from other sources, in attempting to present a sketch of the life of one, who stands forward as a prominent example of some of the most striking traits of the genuine American character.

ISRAEL PUTNAM was born at Salem, in Massachusetts, on the 7th day of January, 1718. His grandfather with two brothers emigrated from the south of England, and was one of the earliest settlers of that ancient town. His father was a farmer, and the son was destined to the same pursuit, for which no great extent of education was then believed to be required. The arts of reading, writing, and a tolerable proficiency in arithmetic, were the only attainments to be acquired in the common schools; and the higher institutions, or "the schools of the prophets," as they were called, were appropriated to the candidates for the liberal professions. We should be slow to censure our ancestors for this, before we ascertain how far the state of the fact is altered at the present day; for their efforts in the cause of education, considering their circumstances and condition, have not yet been excelled by any of their sons.

It is plain, then, that the literary advantages of young Putnam could not be very great; and, such as they were, it is not likely that this species of improvement was uppermost in his mind. His constitution of body was firm and vigorous; and he early displayed that insensibility to danger, which was so strikingly exhibited in his subsequent career. It was the custom of the young men of that day to pursue athletic exercises, of which running, leaping, wrestling, and pitching the bar were the favorite ones, and were regarded as the surest tests of strength and skill; and in these manly sports, which have fallen

* 'An Essay on the Life of Major-General Israel Putnam; addressed to the State Society of the Cincinnati in Connecticut. By DAVID HUMPHREYS.'

of late into almost entire neglect, young Putnam was surpassed by none of his competitors. But the research of his biographers has redeemed from oblivion scarcely a single incident in the youthful history of one, then quite unknown to fame; and the exploits of childhood are rarely of sufficient moment to compensate for the labor of inquiry. There is one, however, characteristic enough to deserve a passing notice. On Putnam's first visit to Boston, he was treated by a boy of the metropolis with the sort of courtesy, with which rustic boys are not unfrequently welcomed. His antagonist was twice as old and large as himself; but he requited the attention with a sound beating, to the entire satisfaction of a numerous body of spectators.

In the twenty-first year of his age, Mr. Putnam was united in marriage to the daughter of Mr. John Pope, of Salem. After her death, which occurred in 1764, he married a Mrs. Gardiner, who died in 1777. About the time of his first marriage he removed to Pomfret, in Connecticut, where he purchased a tract of land and entered upon the occupation of a farmer. At first he met with some of the discouragements, which are apt to render the life of a settler a school of no gentle discipline; but in the course of a few years he became an enterprising and successful cultivator, and was rewarded by a fair measure of prosperity. In this quiet retreat, he remained till the opening of the Seven Years' War presented him with a broader field of action.

It would be quite unpardonable, in writing the life of Putnam, to omit to notice his victory over the she-wolf, at Pomfret; the story of which is familiarly known to every schoolboy in the country, and is very minutely detailed by his principal biographer. This renowned animal had for some years been the scourge and terror of the farmers, whose pursuit of her had been altogether fruitless; though they had succeeded in destroying her young, whom she brought in winter with her from the forest, to bring up in her own arts of marauding. In an evil hour for her own safety, she made an onset upon Putnam's farm-yard. Seventy of his sheep and goats

were killed, and many others wounded, in the course of a single night; and it was determined to resort to decisive measures. Several of the farmers, among whom was Putnam, accordingly entered into an offensive alliance against the common enemy, the condition of the compact being, that the pursuit should only cease with the destruction of the foe.

Fortunately her track was easily recognised, a portion of one of her feet having been lost by an accidental intimacy with a trap. Her pursuers were thus enabled to trace her course to Connecticut River, and thence back again to Pomfret, where she took refuge in a cavern, near the residence of Putnam. The place was selected with great judgement to withstand a siege; as very few persons besides Putnam himself could have been persuaded to reconnoiter the position of its inmate. It is entered by an aperture about two feet square, on the side of a huge ledge of rock. The pathway descends fifteen feet obliquely from the entrance, then pursues a horizontal direction for ten feet, and thence ascends gradually about fifteen feet to its extremity; being in no part wider than three feet, nor high enough to permit a man to stand upright. The access to the interior is rendered very difficult in winter, by the accumulation of ice and snow.

No time was lost by the confederates in devising various methods of attack. A competent force of dogs was collected, with such munitions as were thought suited to this novel warfare. But the hounds that entered the cave retired in great disgust, and could not be prevailed on to repeat the experiment; the smoke of blazing straw was ineffectual; and the fumes of burning brimstone, which were expected to prove quite irresistible, wasted their sweetness in vain. This system of annoyance was continued through the day, until a late hour in the evening, when Putnam, weary of the unsuccessful efforts, endeavored to persuade his negro servant to go into the cave; a proposition which was declined; and his master, after somewhat unreasonably reproaching him with cowardice, resolved, against the earnest remonstrance of his neighbors, to undertake the enterprise himself.

He first procured some birch bark, to light his way and intimidate the wolf by its flame; then threw aside his coat and vest; and, causing a rope to be secured to his legs, by which he might be drawn out at a concerted signal, set fire to his torch and groped his way into the cavern. At the extremity he saw the wolf, who welcomed her unexpected visiter with an ominous growl. His examination being now completed, he gave the appointed signal; and his companions, supposing from the sounds within that the case must be an urgent one, drew him out so precipitately, that his clothes were torn to rags, and his body sorely lacerated.

He now provided himself with a musket, and bearing it in one hand and a lighted torch in the other, proceeded a second time upon his perilous adventure till he drew near the wolf. Just as she was on the point of springing, he took deliberate aim and fired; then, stunned by the explosion and almost suffocated by the smoke, he was again drawn out as before. After a brief interval, he entered the cavern for the third time, applied his torch to the wolf's nose to satisfy himself that her repose was not affected, and, seizing her by the ears, was drawn forth with his prize, to the infinite satisfaction of the party.

This story is not without value, as an illustration of its hero's character. The life of a New England farmer is not usually very fruitful of adventure; nor is there any other incident on record relating to Putnam before the time, when he exchanged his occupation for a less pacific one. One may readily conjecture, that the tranquil pursuits of agriculture could hardly satisfy the ambition of a spirit like his, always most at home in the midst of perilous adventures; and that he must have exulted in the opportunities of acquiring fame and honors, which were afforded by the opening of the great French War, in 1754.

The causes of this eventful struggle belong too closely to the province of history to be required to be stated here. There was a general disposition among the people to prepare for some decisive measures in the following spring. It was with this view, that the memorable

plan of the union of the colonies was projected and matured; but as this, from various causes, proved ineffectual, the arrangements for the campaign were not completed until the arrival of General Braddock in this country, early in 1755. A convention of the several governors was held at his suggestion early in that year, by which it was resolved that three independent expeditions should be undertaken. The first was destined against Fort Duquesne, and was conducted by General Braddock in person; the second, at the head of which was Governor Shirley, against Forts Niagara and Frontenac; and the reduction of Crown Point was the object of the third, which was composed wholly of colonial troops, under the command of Sir William Johnson. A body of troops was to be levied in Connecticut to serve in this last expedition, and the command of one of the companies composing it was bestowed on Mr. Putnam. His personal popularity rendered it easy for him to obtain the best recruits, and the regiment with which he was connected joined the army, near Crown Point, at the beginning of the campaign.

Throughout the war, very important services were rendered by the various corps, distinguished by the name of Rangers. They acted independently of the line of the army, and were employed in executing many perilous duties; reconnoitering the positions of the enemy, serving in the capacity of guides, surprising detached parties, and obtaining prisoners, in order to gain intelligence, by force or stratagem. Among the other offices they were expected to perform, were those of destroying the houses, barns, barracks, and bateaux of the French, killing their cattle, and waylaying their convoys of provisions. They rendered the most valuable aid as scouting parties to watch the movements of the enemy, of which no accurate intelligence could be procured but with the greatest hazard, the country being full of wandering and hostile Indians.

It is obvious, that a mode of life like this required the utmost prudence, sagacity, and alertness, and must have afforded abundant opportunities for wild and difficult ad-

venture. In the Journals* of Major Rogers, the celebrated New Hampshire partisan, are preserved the regulations drawn up by himself for the government of the Rangers under his command; and one needs only read them to be convinced, that it was a service in which only the bold and resolute could be expected to engage. We are not informed whether the corps of Putnam were known from the outset as Rangers; it is very probable that they were so; as they were employed almost exclusively in that capacity, and appear to have been soon distinguished by that name. No service could have been better suited to the character and taste of Putnam.

The campaign of 1755, though distinguished by the stain upon the British arms at Braddock's overthrow, and the victory of the Provincials over Dieskau near Lake George, was not a long one, and afforded less than usual scope for the exertions of the Rangers. A similarity in some respects of character and disposition produced an intimacy between Putnam and Rogers; and

* The first part of this work, which purports to contain an account of the "several excursions made by the author under the generals who commanded upon the continent of North America during the late war," was printed in London in 1765. It presents rather copious sketches of the personal services of the writer, though with less reference to the general operations of the several campaigns, than the reader at this day could desire; but it is by no means destitute of interest; and a work can hardly be regarded as a fair subject of criticism, which was written "not with science and leisure, but in deserts, on rocks and mountains, amidst the hurries, disorders, and noise of war, and under that depression of spirits, which is the natural consequence of exhausting fatigue." Very few notices are to be found in it, at any length, of the prominent individuals, who acted in concert with Major Rogers; the name of Putnam is rarely mentioned, and never with any comment indicating that the least importance was attached by the author to his services. The trifling incident of the preservation of his life by Putnam, is not once alluded to.

A work, published in 1831, in Concord, New Hampshire, and entitled, 'Reminiscences of the French War,' purports to contain, among other matter, this Journal of Rogers; but the editor, without apprizing his readers of the fact, has mutilated the original in a very remarkable manner. Hardly a single sentence is unaltered, and it is quite curious to compare a page of Rogers's own composition with one which has undergone the scalping knife of the New Hampshire editor. We doubt whether the proceeding is to be justified under any circumstances; but it becomes unpardonable when it is attempted without the slightest intimation to the reader.

they frequently acted in concert to reconnoiter the positions of the enemy, surprise their advanced pickets, and obtain intelligence of their purposes and movements.

In one of their excursions, it was the fortune of Putnam to preserve the life of Rogers. Both these officers had been detached with a party of light troops from Fort Edward, to ascertain the state of the fortifications at Crown Point. To approach them with their whole force would have made it difficult to guard against discovery, while the number of straggling Indians in the neighborhood rendered it scarcely less dangerous to advance without support. They, however, left their men concealed behind a willow thicket, and went themselves sufficiently near the works to procure the information they desired. It was now about the hour of sunrise, when the soldiers began to issue in such numbers from the fort, that the partisans found no opportunity to rejoin their men without detection. In the course of an hour or two, a soldier came directly to the spot where Rogers lay concealed at a little distance from Putnam, and, on discovering him, called for aid to an adjacent guard, attempting at the same time to seize Rogers's fusil with one hand, and to stab him with a dirk which he held in the other. Putnam perceived the imminent danger of his associate, and being unwilling to alarm the enemy by firing, ran up and struck the Frenchman dead before him with a single blow from his fusil. The outcry of the soldier had already alarmed the guard; but the partisans succeeded in rejoining their troop, and in returning without loss to their encampment.

By the terms of their enlistment, the colonial troops were engaged to serve only during the campaign; but the commission of Captain Putnam was renewed, and he entered again on duty in the spring of 1756. The general military operations of this year were less fortunate than those of the preceding one. The advantage of many expensive and laborious preparations was wholly lost by the inaction of the British generals. Oswego, an important fortress, was captured by the French, and no attempt was made to dispossess them of their outpost at Ticon-

deroga. A very different result would probably have been exhibited, had the operations of the army been conducted by Provincial officers, who were thoroughly conversant with the country, and the foe with whom they would have had to deal; points, of which the British generals appear to have been profoundly ignorant. It is a relief to turn from the detail of their misconduct, to the personal adventures of the more deserving officers, who acted under them.

Captain Putnam was directed to reconnoiter the position of the enemy at the Ovens, near Ticonderoga. He was accompanied in this enterprise by Lieutenant Robert Durkee, a gallant officer, who afterwards encountered the severest fate, under which humanity can ever be called to suffer.* The two partisans proceeded on their way, until they came near the enemy. It was the custom of the British and Provincial troops to set fires by night in a circle round their camp. The French, on the contrary, more wisely placed them in the centre, so that their sentinels were screened from observation by the darkness.

Putnam and Durkee were unfortunately not aware of this usage, and were creeping slowly on their hands and knees, in order to approach the fires, when they were confounded at finding themselves in the midst of the camp of the enemy, by whom they were discovered and fired upon. Durkee received a bullet in his thigh; but there was no time to be lost, and they began an expeditious retreat. Putnam led the way, and in a few minutes fell head foremost into a clay-pit, followed by Durkee, who had kept closely at his heels. Supposing his companion in the pit to be one of the pursuers, Putnam had raised his arm to stab him, when he recognised Durkee's voice. Both then rushed from their retreat, in the midst of a shower of random bullets, and threw themselves behind a log, where they spent the remainder of the night. On examining his canteen, Putnam found it pierced with balls,

* He was an officer in the Revolution. At the battle of Wyoming, in 1778, he was wounded and made prisoner by the Indians; by whom he was burned at the stake, and treated during his expiring moments with the most savage cruelty.

and its contents entirely gone; and next morning at daylight, he discovered that his blanket was sorely rent by fourteen bullet-holes.

On another occasion, a convoy of baggage and provisions was intercepted by six hundred of the enemy at Halfway Brook, between Fort Edward and Lake George. The plunderers retreated with their booty, having experienced little interruption from the troops by which the convoy was escorted. When the news of this disaster was received at the camp, Captains Putnam and Rogers were ordered in pursuit. They were directed to take with them one hundred men in boats, furnished with two wall-pieces, and the same number of blunderbusses. With these they were to proceed for a certain distance down Lake George, and thence over land to the Narrows, to cut off the enemy's retreat.

Shortly after they had reached the designated spot, they saw from their place of concealment the French bateaux, laden with the plunder of the convoy, sailing into the Narrows, entirely unsuspecting of danger. They await in silence the approach of the bateaux; at the critical moment, they pour upon them a close and most destructive fire; many of the boatmen fall, and several of the bateaux are sunk. A strong wind sweeps the remainder with great rapidity through the passage into South Bay, or the destruction would have been complete. They carry to Ticonderoga the news of their disaster, and a detachment is instantly sent to intercept the Provincials; who, anticipating such a movement, have in the mean time hurried to their boats, which they reach before the close of day.

Next morning they set sail, and, at Sabbath-day Point, meet the detachment of the French, consisting of three hundred men, advancing in boats with the expectation of an easy victory. Not a musket is discharged until they come within pistol shot; then the enemy are thrown at once into confusion by the artillery, aided by a close fire of musketry. The carnage becomes dreadful; of twenty Indians in one of the canoes, fifteen are killed, and very many are seen to fall overboard from others; while, on

the side of the Provincials, only one is killed and two others are wounded. No farther attempt is made to obstruct the retreat of the Provincials, who return in safety to the camp.

Late in the same season, General Webb, who commanded at Fort Edward, sent out Captain Putnam to procure a prisoner; the usual and very compendious method of learning on the best authority the motions of the enemy. He concealed his men near the highway leading from Ticonderoga to the Ovens; but these valiant gentlemen thought fit to ascribe his caution to the influence of fear, and, as there was no enemy in sight, were with much difficulty induced to remain under shelter. Presently an Indian passed by, and at a little distance behind him a Frenchman; and Putnam, calling on his men to follow, sprang to seize upon the latter, overtook him and ordered him to surrender. His men were now convinced of the advantage of concealment, and disregarded his order; and, as Putnam was the only person in view, his intended captive preferred to run the hazard of resisting him. Putnam levelled his piece, but it missed fire, and he retreated, followed by the Frenchman, in the direction where his men were posted; but the other, falling on this unexpected ambuscade, changed his course without delay, and effected his escape. The men, whose conduct had been thus discreditable, were dismissed with disgrace; and Putnam soon accomplished his object with other aid. The incident is worthy of relation, only, as it shows the nature of the tasks imposed upon an active partisan, and the hazard to be encountered in performing them.

The character and services of Putnam had now become generally known; he was found to unite with a total insensibility to danger, a caution and sagacity, which gave him the command of his resources at the moment when they were most required. Nor could any service be better adapted to the exhibition of these qualities, than that in which he was engaged; though it was unfortunately in a sphere too limited, to secure for him a place in history. He was endeared to the soldiers by the cheerfulness with which he shared their perils and privations, and the gal-

lantry, which suffered none to go where he did not himself lead the way; to his superior officers, by the energy and promptness with which he executed their commands; and he began to rise in the esteem of the public generally, as one who was destined to become distinguished in a broader field of action.

CHAPTER II.

Raised to the Rank of Major.—Various Adventures in the War.—Capture of Fort William Henry.—Putnam stationed near Fort Edward.—Encounters the Enemy at South Bay.—Expedition against Ticonderoga.—Death of Lord Howe.

IN 1757, the legislature of Connecticut conferred on Putnam the commission of a major. The Earl of Loudoun, one of the most incompetent British generals who had commanded in the colonies, was then at the head of the military forces in this country. He had arrived at Albany in the summer of the preceding year; but the capture of Oswego by the French had induced him to suspend offensive operations, and to think only of guarding against further loss. By the next spring, the generous efforts of the colonists enabled him to take the field with a numerous and effective force; and it was expected, not without reason, that he should open the campaign in the direction of Canada with some decisive blow. But the people were not yet fully acquainted with the character of their military chief. About midsummer, they were somewhat surprised to learn that he had sailed for Halifax with six thousand of his troops. It was his intention there to join a reinforcement of five thousand men, who had lately arrived from England under the command of Lord Howe, and to attempt the reduction of Louisburg in Cape Breton; but, learning that the garrison of that place had been augmented by an armament

from France, he returned to New York and reposed upon his laurels.

While the British commander was prosecuting his voyage of discovery, the condition of Fort William Henry, then a frontier post, was such as to invite the assault of the enemy. This ill-fated fortress, the name of which still awakens melancholy recollections, was situated at the southwestern extremity of Lake George. It was a structure of no great strength, on a small eminence, which rose gradually from the waters of the lake. Its garrison at this time consisted of about three thousand men; and, as an additional security, General Webb was stationed about fifteen miles distant at Fort Edward, with a force considerably larger.

The Marquis de Montcalm, the French commander, having collected about eight or nine thousand men, including a large body of Indians, appeared before Fort William Henry on the 3d of August, with a summons to surrender. In his letter to the commanding officer of the garrison, he urged the capitulation by considerations of humanity, declaring that his power to restrain the Indians would be lost, after the blood of any of them should be shed. No written answer was given to the summons; a verbal reply was returned by the bearer, that the fort would be defended to the last extremity.

Another sad illustration was yet to be afforded of the incapacity of generals, and a still more melancholy one of the atrocities of savage warfare. Just before the siege began, General Webb, accompanied by Major Putnam and two hundred men, went to Fort William Henry, to ascertain the state of its defences. While the general was thus engaged, Major Putnam offered to go with five men to Northwest Bay, sending back the boats to prevent detection, and obtain accurate information respecting the situation of the French at Ticonderoga.

This proposition was rejected as too hazardous. He was, however, permitted to undertake the enterprise, with eighteen volunteers. They immediately embarked in three whale-boats, and set forward on their expedition. Before they arrived at Northwest Bay, a large body of

the enemy was discovered on an island. Leaving two of his boats, as if for the purpose of fishing, Putnam returned with the remaining one to communicate what he had seen. The general, whose valor was his least shining accomplishment, seeing the major make for the land with his force thus reduced, despatched a skiff to him with orders to come to the shore alone.

With some difficulty, he obtained permission to return in quest of his companions and to make additional discoveries. He found his men in the place where he had left them, and immediately after encountered a large number of boats in motion on the lake, from the foremost of which he was enabled to escape only by the superior fleetness of his own. There was no longer any room for doubt, that this armament was destined against Fort William Henry; and Putnam so informed the general, who ordered him to preserve strict silence on the subject, and to exact an oath of secrecy from his men.

In vain he endeavored to urge the necessity of meeting the enemy on the shore. "What do you think we should do here?" was the discreet reply. Next morning, the general returned with his escort to Fort Edward, and detached a reenforcement to Fort William Henry. In twenty-four hours afterwards, the fortress was invested by the enemy.

During six days, was it defended against a far superior force, provided with artillery. Express after express was in the mean time sent to Fort Edward for relief; but, though the force of Webb had been increased by the addition of Johnson's troops and the militia, he made not the slightest effort to avert its fate. Once, indeed, he yielded to the solicitations of Sir William Johnson, and permitted those, who would volunteer in the service, to march for its relief. The privilege was eagerly embraced by the Provincials, including Putnam's Rangers; but scarcely had they begun their march, when the general's heart failed him, and they were ordered back. They returned with tears of indignation and sorrow.

General Webb believed his duty sufficiently discharged when he wrote to Colonel Monroe, the commander

of the fort, advising him to surrender; and it is a striking example of the danger of pusillanimity, that the indecision of this strangely inefficient personage was the direct cause of the subsequent disaster. When Putnam was a prisoner in Canada, he was assured by Montcalm himself, that the movement of the Provincials from Fort Edward had been reported to him by his Indian scouts, who represented them to be as numerous as the leaves upon the trees; that the operations of the siege were suspended, and preparations for retreat were immediately made, when the news of their return encouraged him to persevere with greater vigor.

All expectations of relief were now at an end; two of the largest guns of the fort had burst, and further resistance must be obviously unavailing; articles of capitulation were therefore signed, by which protection against the Indians was pledged to the garrison, and they were to be permitted to march forth with the honors of war.

The event which followed, and which was long known throughout the continent as the Massacre of Fort William Henry, can hardly be recited now without a thrill of horror. The troops began their march from the fortress. Just as the rear-guard issued from the gates, the whole body of the Indians fell upon them with the utmost fury, slaughtering them in cold blood. Great numbers were killed, and others were taken prisoners. No efforts were made by the French to put an end to these atrocities; no protection, demanded alike by honor and humanity, was given, until only a miserable remnant of the garrison was left.

Early the next day, Putnam, who had been sent out with his Rangers to watch the movements of the enemy, reached the scene of carnage, just as the rear-guard of the French were embarking on the lake. The barracks were still burning, and hundreds of human bodies lay half-consumed among the ruins. Those of more than one hundred women were scattered around, torn and mutilated in a manner which no language is adequate to tell. One may conceive with what feelings the generous and warm-hearted soldier must have looked upon a scene

like this. As we read the dark and bloody tale, we almost pardon the stern vengeance with which our fathers strove to crush so merciless a foe; but what a picture does it give of modern civilization, that the most enlightened nations hesitated not to employ these demons as the instruments of war!

General Lyman soon after this took the command at Fort Edward, and labored to strengthen its defences. With this view he employed a party of one hundred and fifty men to procure timber in its neighborhood, and stationed Captain Little at the head of a morass, about a hundred rods eastward from the fort, to cover them. This post was connected with the fort by a tongue of land, on one side of which was a creek, and the morass extended on the other. One morning at daybreak, a sentinel saw what he imagined to be birds, flying swiftly from the morass over his head; but he was enlightened as to the true genus of these feathered messengers, when he saw an arrow quivering in a tree, just by him. A body of savages had concealed themselves in the morass in the hope of surprising the party, and had resorted to this noiseless method of despatching the sentinel.

The alarm was instantly given; the laborers fled towards the fort, and were furiously attacked by the Indians; but their progress was arrested by the close and seasonable fire of Little's party, which enabled such of the fugitives as were not wounded to reach the fort in safety. The situation of the small band, pressed as they were by an overwhelming force, became very precarious; but the commander of the fort, instead of sending a detachment to their aid, ordered all the outposts to be called in and the gates to be closed.

Putnam was stationed with his Rangers on an island, near the fort, where intelligence soon reached him of the peril of Little and his party. Without the hesitation of an instant, they dashed into the water, and waded as rapidly as they could to the scene of action. On their way they passed so near the fort, that General Lyman called to them from the parapet, and ordered them peremptorily to return; but Putnam made a brief apology,

and, without waiting to ascertain whether it was satisfactory, hurried on with his men.

In a few minutes, they were at the side of the little band of regulars, who gallantly maintained their ground; then, at the command of Putnam, they rushed with loud huzzas upon the savages directly into the morass. The charge was completely successful; the Indians fled in every direction, and were pursued with great slaughter until nightfall. Colonel Humphreys remarks, that all is not right in the military system, when the orders of superior officers are disregarded with impunity, and intimates that Putnam should have been subjected to the discipline of a court-martial. Nothing of the kind, however, appears to have been attempted; the general was probably content with the result, and cared not that his own conduct should be contrasted with that of those, who served him contrary to his will.

In the winter of this year, the barracks adjacent to the northwestern bastion of Fort Edward accidentally took fire. Within twelve feet of them stood the magazine, containing three hundred barrels of powder. By the orders of Colonel Haviland, who then commanded at this post, some heavy pieces of artillery were brought to bear upon the barracks, to batter them to the ground, but without success. Putnam reached the fort from his station on the island, while the flames were spreading fiercely in the direction of the magazine, and took his post on the roof of the barrack, as nearly as possible to the blaze. A line of soldiers was formed through a postern to the river, from which water was conveyed to Putnam, who threw it on the fire, standing all the while so near it, that his mittens were burned from his hands. He was supplied with another pair soaked in water, and kept his post.

Colonel Haviland, considering his situation to be too dangerous, urged him to descend; but he replied that a suspension of his efforts would be fatal, and entreated to be suffered to remain; and the colonel, encouraged by his intrepidity, gave orders that nothing more should be removed from the fort, exclaiming, that if they must perish,

all should be blown up together. The barracks began to totter; Putnam came down and took his station between them and the magazine; the external planks of this building were consumed, and there remained only a partition of timber between the powder and the flames; still he refused to quit his post, and continued pouring on the water until the fire was happily subdued.

He had contended with the flames for an hour and a half; his face, his hands, and almost his whole body were blistered; and, in removing the mittens from his hands, the skin was torn off with them. Several weeks elapsed, before he recovered from the effects of the exposure; but he was rewarded by the earnest thanks of his commander, and by the consciousness that, but for him, the fortress must have been in ruins.

A brighter day began to dawn upon the British arms in every quarter of the country, but the neighborhood of Lake George and Lake Champlain. There, the same fortune which had hitherto attended them underwent no immediate change. The popular voice had overborne the royal will, and had compelled George the Second to receive Mr. Pitt as his prime minister. The name of this great man is more closely associated with commanding energy of character, than any other in the history of England; it made, as, in the eloquent language of Burke, it kept, the name of his country respectable in every other on the globe. Nowhere was that name held in greater respect, and nowhere did it inspire more confidence, than in America.

He assumed the direction of affairs in the summer of 1757; and his attention was at once directed to the conduct of the war in this country. The colonies, justly appreciating his vigor and talent, renewed their generous but exhausting efforts to recruit the army for the next campaign; and the extent of their exertions can only be understood, when it is considered that fifteen thousand men were supplied by Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, at a time when the resources of all were hardly equal to those of any one of them now.

Three expeditions were proposed to be undertaken;

Louisburg was the destination of the first, Fort Duquesne of the second, and Crown Point and Ticonderoga of the third. The results of the two first are sufficiently well known; the course of our narrative will lead us into some detail respecting the last. Not even the ability of Pitt could immediately turn the current of adverse fortune, which had been flowing with so little interruption in the region, where the scene of our story has thus far been laid.

General Abercromby, who now assumed the chief command in this department, ordered Major Putnam to proceed with fifty men to South Bay in Lake George, in order to watch the motions of the enemy, and intercept their straggling parties. The detachment marched to Wood Creek, near the point where it flows into South Bay; there, in obedience to Putnam's directions, they constructed a parapet of stone, thirty feet in length, on a cliff that overhangs the water; securing it from observation by young pines, so disposed that they appeared to have grown upon the spot. Fifteen of the soldiers, who became unfit for duty, were sent back from this station to the camp.

Late in the evening of the fourth day since he occupied the post, Major Putnam was informed that a large number of canoes, filled with men, were slowly entering the mouth of the creek. All the sentinels were called in, and each man was stationed at the point where his fire would be most effective, receiving positive orders from Putnam to reserve it, until he should give the word. The moon was at the full, and every movement of the enemy was perfectly in view. The most advanced canoes had passed the parapet, when a soldier accidentally struck his firelock against a stone. Alarmed at the sound, those in the foremost canoes ceased to advance, and the whole were crowded in a body at the very base of the temporary fortification. The leaders consulted together, and apparently resolved to return into the Bay.

Just as they were changing their course, Putnam gave the word to fire, and it was obeyed with terrible effect; hardly a shot failed to find its victim, amidst the dense

mass of the enemy beneath, whose fire was wasted on an invisible foe. The carnage had continued for some time, when the enemy, perceiving from the fire that the number of their assailants must be small, detached a party to land below in order to surround them; but the movement had been watched by Putnam, and the party was repulsed by twelve men, under the command of Lieutenant Durkee. During the whole night were the enemy exposed to the murderous fire from the parapet. At daybreak, Putnam learned that a detachment had effected a landing at some distance below; his ammunition also began to fail, and he gave the order to retreat.

It was afterwards ascertained, that the enemy consisted of a corps of five hundred men, commanded by the well-known partisan Molang; and that more than half their number perished on that fatal night. Two only of Putnam's little band were wounded; they were ordered to the camp under the escort of two other soldiers, but were pursued and overtaken by the Indians. Finding their own fate inevitable, they persuaded their escort to leave them, and quietly awaited the approach of the foe. One of them, a Provincial, whose thigh had been broken by a bullet, killed three of the savages by a single discharge of his musket. He was instantly put to death; but the other, an Indian, was made prisoner, and related these circumstances afterwards to Putnam, who encountered him in Canada.

While the party were effecting their retreat, they were fired on by an unexpected enemy. Putnam, who was never disconcerted, ordered his men to charge, when the leader of the other party, recognising his voice, cried out that they were friends. Friends or foes, replied Putnam, they deserved to perish for doing so little execution with so fair a shot; only one man had been wounded by the fire. Soon after, they were met by a corps detached to cover their retreat, and regained the fort on the following day.

The expedition against Ticonderoga, which has been already mentioned, was led by General Abercromby in person. His force consisted of sixteen thousand men,

amply provided with artillery and military stores. On the morning of the 5th of July, 1758, they were embarked in bateaux, and began to descend Lake George, the whole array presenting a brilliant and imposing spectacle. They reached Sabbath-day Point at evening. Here they halted for a few hours, and then resumed their voyage, Lord Howe leading the van.

An officer, who had been sent to ascertain whether the proposed landing-place was unobstructed, returned at daybreak with the information, that it was in possession of the enemy. Another place of landing was selected, and the troops were disembarked at mid-day on the 6th of July. Rogers advanced with his Rangers and drove the enemy before him, and the columns of the army began their march. Lord Howe led the centre, and Putnam was at his side. Some musketry was heard upon the left. "What means this firing?" said Lord Howe. "I know not, but with your Lordship's leave will ascertain," replied Putnam. He went, accompanied, in opposition to his earnest remonstrances, by Lord Howe, with one hundred of the van. The firing proceeded from a portion of the advanced guard of the enemy, who had lost their way in the woods, while retreating before Rogers. They were soon encountered; and at their first discharge, Lord Howe fell.

No heavier loss could well have been sustained. This young nobleman was in the prime of manhood, of fine address, full of amiable qualities, and eminent for manly virtue; his military fame was already high, and presented the most brilliant promise for the future. Never was a British officer so much endeared to the Provincial troops, or enjoyed more of the general esteem and confidence. He was regretted equally for what he was, and what he was expected to become; but the man, over whom the tears of a people are shed, cannot be said to have descended immaturity to the tomb.

His death was avenged by his troops, who charged the enemy, and drove them from the field. Having accomplished this, they were returning to the lines, when they were fired upon, on the supposition that they were of

the French army. Several men were killed; nor was the danger averted, until Putnam ran through the midst of the fire, explained the mistake, and thus secured his men from farther injury. He remained himself upon the field until evening, attending to the wounded French, and providing them with such alleviations as he had it in his power to bestow.*

“The fall of Lord Howe,” says Rogers in his Journal, “appeared to produce an almost general consternation and languor.” Certain it is, that from that hour the enterprise wholly ceased to prosper. No progress was made during the next day; but the principal engineer was sent forward to examine the defences of Ticonderoga; he reported in favor of hazarding an attack without waiting to bring up the artillery, and the preparations were immediately made. This fortress stood on a peninsula in Lake Champlain, very near the shore; and the French lines, which were defended by two redoubts and strong *abattis*, extended across the neck of the peninsula.

The garrison at this time consisted of six thousand men; three thousand more, who had been detached to the Mohawk River, were hourly expected to return. On the morning of the 8th of July, the British troops advanced to the attack over a track swept by the deadly fire of a sheltered enemy; and were shot down by hundreds as they rushed forward to the *abattis*, and vainly labored to remove this fatal obstacle. Three times, in the course of four hours, did they assault the works with unyielding resolution; but their gallantry was wholly unavailing, and their officers at last put an end to this wanton sacrifice of life, and ordered them to retire.

About two thousand of the assailants perished in this rash attack, during the whole progress of which General Abercromby remained in safety two miles from the scene

* Colonel Humphreys assures us, in his *Life of Putnam*, that Major Rogers was sent next morning to bring off the wounded prisoners; “but, finding the wounded unable to help themselves, in order to save trouble, he despatched every one of them to the world of spirits.” We have no means of contradicting or confirming a story, which every reader would be glad to believe unfounded.

of action. Not a single piece of artillery was ordered up, and the assault was made precisely in the spot where the lines were best defended. Even at the moment of their retreat, the English force was more than twice as great as that of the garrison; the fortress might still have been reduced by a well-conducted siege; but all further operations were at once abandoned. Major Putnam, who had been employed throughout the action in bringing up the Provincial regiments, rendered great service in securing the retreat; and, by the evening of the next day, the whole army had regained their camp at the south end of Lake George. The annals of even this war give no example of a more unfortunate or ill-conducted enterprise.

CHAPTER III.

Perilous Descent of the Rapids at Fort Miller.—Battle with the Indians.—Putnam taken Prisoner and treated with great Cruelty.—Sent to Ticonderoga, and thence to Montreal.—Exchanged, and returns to the Army.—Colonel Schuyler.—Putnam is commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel.—Serves under General Amherst.—Takes part in the Expedition against Havana.—Engaged in an Enterprise against the Western Indians.—Retires from the Army after Ten Years' Service.

ONE day in the course of this summer, while Major Putnam was lying in a bateau with five men on the east side of the Hudson, near the rapids by Fort Miller, he was suddenly warned from the opposite shore that the Indians were upon him. His bateau was at the head of the rapids; to remain or cross the river would be inevitably fatal. Before the bateau could be put in motion, the Indians opened their fire from the bank; one man, who, being at a little distance from the rest, had been

of necessity left behind, was instantly seized by them, and killed.

Without a moment's hesitation, Putnam seized the helm, and steered his bateau directly down the river ; there was scarcely even a chance for escape ; the current was broken into whirlpools and eddies, as it rushed furiously over shelves and among projecting rocks. Without any aid from his companions, who were aghast at the danger, he guided his boat, as it shot down, in the course which seemed least threatening, avoiding the rocks and stemming the eddies. Sometimes it was turned fairly round, again it sped onward with the fleetness of a dart ; till, in a few minutes, it was gliding quietly over the smooth stream below.

"On witnessing this spectacle," says Colonel Humphreys, "it is asserted these rude sons of nature were affected with the same sort of superstitious veneration which the Europeans, in the dark ages, entertained for some of their most valorous companions. They deemed the man invulnerable, whom their balls on his pushing from the shore could not touch ; and whom they had seen steering in safety down the rapids that had never before been passed. They conceived it would be an affront against the Great Spirit to kill this favored mortal with powder and ball, if they should ever see and know him again." It will be seen, however, that some of the race were not inclined to push these religious scruples so far, as to deny themselves the satisfaction of subjecting him to the ordeal of fire.

In the month of August, Major Putnam was deserted by the fortune which had hitherto attended him, and encountered some of the most remarkable of those perils, which give a character of romance to his personal history. A corps of five hundred men, under the command of Major Rogers and himself, was detached to watch the enemy in the neighborhood of Ticonderoga. When the party reached South Bay, it was separated into two divisions, which were stationed at a considerable distance from each other ; but, being discovered by the enemy,

it was deemed expedient to reunite them, and to return without delay to headquarters at Fort Edward.

They were arranged for this purpose in three divisions. Rogers headed the right, Putnam the left, and the central one was led by Captain Dalzell. At the close of the first day's march, they halted on the borders of Clear River. Early the next morning, Major Rogers, with a strange disregard of those precautions to which the Rangers were so often indebted for security, amused himself by a trial of skill with a British officer, in firing at a mark ; and this signal act of imprudence was followed by the loss of many lives.

Molang, the French partisan, had been sent out with five hundred men to intercept the party, and was at this moment lying scarce a mile from their encampment. The sound of the firing guided him at once to their position ; and he posted his men in ambush along the outskirts of the forest, near the paths through which they were to pass. Soon after sunrise, the Americans resumed their march through a thicket of shrubs and brushwood, over land from which the timber had been partially cleared some years before ; and, owing to the difficulty of forcing their way through these obstructions, they moved in close columns, Putnam leading the way, Dalzell being stationed in the centre, and Rogers in the rear. Just as they had traversed the thicket and were about to penetrate the forest, they were furiously attacked by the French and savages.

The assault, however unexpected, was sustained with gallantry and coolness ; Putnam ordered his men to halt, returned the fire, and called upon Dalzell and Rogers to support him. Dalzell came immediately up, but Rogers, instead of advancing to the aid of his associates, stationed his men between the combatants and Wood Creek, in order, as he affirmed, to guard against an attack in the rear ; or, as was suspected by others, to relieve himself from the necessity of making one in an opposite direction. The action began to assume a desperate character. Putnam was determined to maintain his ground ; his soldiers, as occasion required, fought in

ranks in the open spaces of the forest, or fired from behind the shelter of the trees. But his own fusil chanced to miss fire, while he held its muzzle against the breast of an athletic savage; thus defenceless, he was compelled to surrender; and his antagonist, having bound him securely to a tree, returned to the battle.

Captain Dalzell, who now commanded, maintained the fight with signal intrepidity; but the Provincials were compelled to retreat for a little distance, closely followed by the savages, exulting in their fancied triumph, and rushing forward with shouts of victory. The Provincials rallied and drove them back beyond their former position; and the battle here grew warmer than before. The tree to which Putnam was secured was thus brought midway between the combatants, in the centre of the hottest fire of both; and he stood, wholly unable to move his body, or even to incline his head, in the midst of a shower of balls, of which many lodged in the tree above him, and several passed through the sleeves and skirts of his coat.

In this position, than which it would be difficult for the imagination to conceive one more appalling, he remained for more than an hour; each of the parties meanwhile giving ground several times in succession, but not so far as to place him beyond the field of contest. Once, when the Provincials had retired a little and the savages were near him, a young Indian amused himself by throwing his tomahawk at the tree, apparently to ascertain how nearly he could cast it to the body of the prisoner, without striking him; and the weapon more than once lodged in the tree, within a hair's breadth of the mark. When this barbarian grew weary of his sport, a French subaltern drew near, and levelled his musket at Putnam's breast. Fortunately it missed fire. It was in vain that the latter claimed the treatment due to him as a prisoner of war. The Frenchman, instead of desisting, pushed him violently with his musket, and after dealing him a severe blow upon the cheek with the but-end of his piece, left him to his fate.

After a long and gallant contest, the Provincials remained in possession of the field; the enemy were routed with

the loss of ninety of their number, and retired, taking with them their prisoner, who was destined to undergo still greater suffering.

When the Indians had retreated to a considerable distance from the field of the battle, they deprived Major Putnam of his coat, vest, stockings, and shoes, bound his hands tightly together, and piled the packs of a number of the wounded on his back. In this wretched condition, exhausted by fatigue, and severely suffering from the injuries he had received, he was forced to march for many miles through a mountainous and rugged tract; until the party, overcome with weariness, at length halted to rest themselves. Meantime, the tightness of the cords around his wrists had caused his hands to swell, and made them exquisitely painful; the blood was flowing from his torn and naked feet; the weight of his burden became intolerable to his exhausted frame; and he entreated the savages to loose his hands or to release him from his sufferings by death.

A French officer interposed, removed the ligatures, and relieved him of a portion of his burden; the Indian who had made him captive, and who had remained behind to attend to the wounded, also came up, provided him with moccasins, and expressed much indignation at the treatment which he had received; but soon went back, without taking measures to secure him against its repetition.

A spot for the evening's encampment was selected, and the Indians, taking with them Major Putnam, went thither in advance of the rest of the party. On the way he experienced fresh outrages, and was deeply wounded on the cheek by a blow from a tomahawk. He had been thus far spared for a darker purpose; it had been resolved that he should perish at the stake, with all those refinements of torture, by which the savages know how to enhance the bitterness of death. The depths of the forest were chosen as the scene of sacrifice. The victim was bound entirely naked to a tree; large piles of fuel were laid in a circle around him; and, while these fearful preparations were in progress, they were rendered more appalling by the wild songs and exultation of the Indians.

When all was ready and their victim was awaiting the hour of death with the fortitude which never failed him, the fire was set to the fuel about him; but a sudden shower extinguished the flames. After repeated efforts, the blaze began to rise from every portion of the circle. Putnam's hands were closely bound, but he was still able to move his body; and his convulsive writhing to avoid the flame gave infinite diversion to his tormentors, who accompanied their orgies with songs and dances, and their usual terrific expressions of delight.

All hope of relief was now at an end, and nature was beginning to yield to the excess of suffering, when a French officer rushed through the throng, dashed aside the blazing brands, and cut the cords of the prisoner. A savage, touched by some sudden impulse of humanity, had hurried to inform Molang of the proceedings of his fellows; and it was this brave partisan himself, who had thus, at the last extremity, redeemed from the most horrible of deaths a gallant foe. After sternly reprimanding the Indians for their cruelty, he took Putnam under his protection, until he could restore him to his savage master.

The kindness of this master (for so the Indian who captured Putnam was considered) bore some resemblance to the tender mercies of the wicked. He appeared to feel for the sufferings of his prisoner; and, finding him unable to eat the hard bread set before him, in consequence of the injury inflicted by the Frenchman, moistened it with water for his relief. Apprehensive, however, that Putnam might take advantage of the darkness to escape, he removed his moccasins, and bound them to his wrists; then placed him on the ground upon his back, and, extending his arms as far asunder as possible, secured them to two young trees. His legs were next secured in the same ingenious manner. Several long and slender poles were next cut, and laid, together with bushes, transversely across Putnam's body; on the extremities of these lay several Indians, in such a manner that the slightest effort to escape must awaken them.

Having completed this singular cage, the Indians were

content with the provision they had made for his safe-keeping; and in this particularly inconvenient prison Putnam spent the dreary night that followed his release from death. He was accustomed to relate, that, even while thus reposing, he could not refrain from smiling as he thought of the odd subject for the canvass which was presented by the group of which he constituted the most prominent figure; but his merriment was probably of short duration.

Next morning he was released from durance, and provided with a blanket; some bear's meat was given him to allay his hunger, and he was permitted to resume his march without a burden. Some vexation was occasionally shown by the savages, by menacing signs and gestures, on account of the loss of their expected entertainment; but they were no longer suffered to molest him, and he reached Ticonderoga the same night, without experiencing farther violence. On his arrival there, he was placed in the custody of a French guard.

After having been examined by Montcalm, Major Putnam was transferred to Montreal. He was conducted thither by a French officer, from whom he received a courtesy and kindness which were the more welcome, from the indignities he had so lately suffered. Several American prisoners were in that city at the time; among the number was Colonel Peter Schuyler. When he heard of the arrival of Putnam, Colonel Schuyler hastened to ascertain the place of his abode. The Provincial major had been suffered to remain without a coat, vest, or stockings; the remnant of his clothing was miserably tattered, and his body exhibited serious marks of the violence he had endured. Colonel Schuyler, when he came into his presence, was so affected by the sight, that he could hardly, in the language of Humphreys, "contain his speech within limits consistent with the prudence of a prisoner, and the meekness of a Christian."

He immediately supplied his countryman with all that his necessities required; and, after securing to him, by the most active intercession, the treatment to which his rank entitled him, found means to render him a more

important service. The capture of Frontenac by the British occasioned an exchange of prisoners, of which Putnam reaped the benefit by a stratagem of Colonel Schuyler. There were several officers among the prisoners, whose claim to be exchanged was superior to his; and Schuyler, fearing that the opportunity might be lost if the character of the prisoner should be known, prevailed upon the governor to permit him to name an officer to be included in the cartel. He then assured his excellency, that he should name an old Provincial major, who was of no service there or elsewhere, but was very anxious to return to his wife and family, in preference to the young men, who had no families to care for.

There is another instance of the beneficence of Colonel Schuyler, not wholly unconnected with the object of this narrative. Mrs. Howe, the story of whose captivity by the Indians is familiar to American readers, was an inmate of his family in Montreal, at the time of which we speak. The first husband of this lady had been murdered by the Indians, several years before. Mr. Howe, the second, met with a similar fate at Fort Dummer, in 1756; and his wife, with seven children, was carried into captivity. They wandered for many months, exposed to the extremity of hardship and privation. Her two daughters were destined by the Indians to become the wives of two young warriors; but this scheme was defeated by the address of their mother, who prevailed upon the French commander to procure them admission into a convent at Montreal. The sons, five in number, were distributed among various Indian tribes. She was herself ransomed from the Indians by an old French officer, from whose rude importunities, as well as those of his son, she found it difficult to escape.

She had heard of Colonel Schuyler, and found means to acquaint him with her story. With his usual generosity he immediately paid the price of her ransom, and thought his work of charity imperfectly accomplished, until all her sons were restored to her. It became necessary for him to return home before the other prisoners were ready for the journey; and he recommended

Mrs. Howe and her family to the charge of Major Putnam, with whom she returned in safety to her friends; both having experienced a larger measure of suffering, than humanity is often called to undergo.

In 1759, a plan was formed for the entire expulsion of the French from their possessions on this continent. Three powerful armies were to enter Canada by different routes; General Wolfe was appointed to conduct an expedition up the St. Lawrence against Quebec; General Amherst, after reducing Ticonderoga and Crown Point, was to join him under the walls of that city; and a third army was destined against Fort Niagara. General Prideaux, the commander of the last, after reducing that fortress, was to attack Montreal, and, if successful, was to unite himself with the grand army at Quebec. This vast scheme was only partially accomplished before the close of the campaign.

The name and victory of Wolfe are familiar in the mouths of all as household words. Amherst succeeded in the reduction of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, but at so late a period as to prevent him from advancing into Canada; the fortress of Niagara was also taken by Prideaux, but it was not thought prudent to hazard an attack on Montreal. Such was the general condition of affairs at the close of 1759. Putnam, who had been raised to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, accompanied the army of Amherst, and was employed during the latter part of the season in strengthening the defences of Crown Point; but we have no means of giving any particular detail of his operations.

The next season, that of 1760, witnessed the termination of the war in this portion of America. Montreal was the only important post remaining in possession of the French, whose whole force was concentrated in its neighborhood. General Amherst, the British commander-in-chief, had employed the winter in preparations to unite his forces under the walls of that city. With this view, General Murray was to advance upon it by water from Quebec; Colonel Haviland was to proceed thither from Crown Point by the way of Lake Champlain; while

Amherst himself, at the head of an army of ten thousand men, was to enter the St. Lawrence by the way of Lake Ontario, and descend it to Montreal.

In falling down the river, the progress of the troops was arrested by two armed vessels near the mouth of the Oswegatchie, in a position which effectually prevented the British from attacking the fort of the same name in the vicinity. Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam's activity and resources were called into requisition to remove the obstacle; and he undertook, with one thousand men, in fifty bateaux, to carry the vessels by boarding. Having made his preparations, he took his station in the van, with a chosen crew, and provided with the somewhat odd munitions of a beetle and wedges; with these he intended to secure the rudders of the vessels, so that they might be prevented from bringing their broadsides to bear. At the appointed signal, the bateaux were put in motion, Putnam having quite unnecessarily assured his men, that he should show them the way up the vessels' sides. But the object was effected in a less sanguinary way; at the moment of attack, the crew of one of the vessels compelled its captain to strike, and the other was run on shore.

The fort of Oswegatchie was situated on an island, and was defended by *abattis*, overhanging the water, and apparently quite inaccessible. Putnam again devised a method of attack, for which he was indebted to no mortal engineer. With the permission of General Amherst, he caused a number of boats to be prepared, with musket-proof fascines along the sides, forming a complete shelter from the fire of the enemy; and a broad plank, twenty feet in length, was so attached to the bows of each, that it could be elevated or depressed at pleasure. It was his intention to force the boats directly against the *abattis*; when the planks, till then upright, were to be lowered, so as to form a species of bridge over the projecting stakes, and thus enable the assailants to scale them; the attention of the enemy was meanwhile to be distracted by simultaneous attacks upon various portions of the works. The signal had been given, and the boats were moving in order

to the attack, when the sight of their strange enginery discomposed the nerves of the besieged, who surrendered without a blow.

Putnam was highly complimented for his ingenuity and courage by the general-in-chief; and it is in no small degree to be attributed to him, that the armies of Amherst and Murray, approaching Montreal from opposite directions, arrived on the same day beneath its walls. Colonel Haviland came in immediately after, when the conquest of Canada became complete, by the capitulation of the French.

It deserves to be mentioned that Putnam met once more with his savage master, at an Indian village in the neighborhood of Montreal, and was welcomed by him with much hospitality. The change of circumstances had given him an opportunity, which he did not neglect, of requiting the attentions of the Indian, whose kindness, though not of the most delicate kind, had been quite beyond the usual standard of his race.

In the spring of 1762, war having been declared by Great Britain against Spain, a powerful armament was prepared at Portsmouth for the reduction of Havana. A body of four thousand regulars was ordered from New York to join the expedition on the coast of Cuba, and a large Provincial force, under its own officers, cooperated in the enterprise. The regiment from Connecticut was under the command of General Lyman; but, as he was called to the command of the whole Provincial force, the charge of it devolved on Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam.

The fleet arrived in safety on the coast of Cuba; but a violent storm arose before the troops were landed, and one of the transports, in which was Putnam with five hundred men, was thrown upon a dangerous reef. No aid could be afforded by the other ships, which with difficulty rode out the gale; but rafts were prepared of masts and spars, secured together with cordage, by means of which every individual reached the shore in safety. Having fortified his camp, Putnam remained for several days until the storm subsided; his troops were then reembarked in the convoy, and joined the armament before Havana.

Their seasonable arrival gave fresh courage to the English, who had landed several weeks before, and had already lost half their number by privation, disease, and the sword. Their efforts were at length successful, but the success was very dearly purchased; the troops sunk by hundreds beneath the influence of the burning climate; scarcely any of the American soldiers, and a feeble remnant of the officers, returned to their own country.

The hostilities of the western Indians were not terminated by the treaty of Paris, in 1763; and a new expedition was undertaken against them in the course of the next year, to which Connecticut contributed four hundred men. This corps was under the command of Putnam, who now for the first time received the commission of a colonel. Among his companions in the expedition was the Indian chief, of whom he had been formerly the captive. Little opportunity, however, was afforded for brilliant services; the savages were overawed, and next year concluded a treaty with the English.

A single incident occurred, which requires to be mentioned here. Before the Provincials reached Detroit, it had been invested by the Indians. Among its defenders was Captain Dalzell, the old associate and friend of Putnam. He had been detached by General Amherst to raise the siege, and found means to gain admission to the fortress; but, reluctant to disobey the orders of his commander, made a desperate sally against a formidable force. His troops were surrounded, and attempted to retreat. They had gained a temporary shelter, when he saw one of his sergeants without, desperately wounded, and exposed to capture by the enemy; his men were ordered to bring him in, but they declined the undertaking, as too hazardous; Captain Dalzell then went forth alone, declaring that he would never leave his comrade at the mercy of the savages. As he was raising the wounded man from the ground, the fire of the enemy was poured in, and they fell together. No nobler death ever ended the triumphs of the brave!

Colonel Putnam had now been engaged in the military service for about ten years; and no man quitted it with

greater honor. A larger measure of hardship and danger than had fallen to his lot, is rarely crowded into the compass of a single life. All this had been encountered, and all his duties been discharged with a chivalrous bravery and fulness of resource, which commanded universal admiration. Military education, except such as was the result of his experience, he had absolutely none; his early instruction was very defective, and, had it been otherwise, could have done little towards qualifying him for the life which he had chosen; but he had a calm good sense, a ready ingenuity, unbounded energy and self-possession in the midst of danger, which had made him fully equal to all the stations he was called to fill.

Personal bravery is perhaps the cheapest of the military virtues; but there was something cool, daring, and unostentatious in that of Putnam, which attracted equally the wonder of the cultivated and the rude. In the words recorded by a personal friend upon his monument, he had always "dared to lead, where any dared to follow." His disposition was full of the frankness of the soldier, united with a kindness and generosity not always found in union with the sterner qualities demanded by the life of camps; an extended intercourse with others had refined the asperities of his manners, without impairing the simplicity of his genuine New England character.

He carried with him into private life the esteem and confidence of all. Throughout the country, there prevailed a strong feeling of respect for his services and military talent; and he was regarded as not the least able proficient in that seminary of no gentle discipline, the Seven Years' War. As there was now no call for the display of his ability as a soldier, he returned to his plough; and his fellow citizens took pleasure in offering such testimonies of esteem as it was in their power to give, by electing him to fill the higher municipal offices, and to represent them in the General Assembly of the State.

CHAPTER IV.

Colonel Putnam opposes the Stamp Act.—Goes to Mississippi River to select Lands.—His Intimacy with the British Officers in Boston.—Hastens to the Army on hearing of the Battle of Lexington.—Made a Brigadier-General of the Connecticut Troops.—Battle of Bunker's Hill.

THE great drama of the Revolution had already opened. In 1764, the British Parliament resolved that it would be proper to impose certain stamp duties, with a view to raise a revenue in America; and next year the fatal scheme was consummated by the passage of the Stamp Act. The ties, which bound the colonies to the mother country, were nearly severed, and a flame began to ascend, which could be extinguished only with blood.

From the outset, Putnam's heart and hand were devoted to the cause of freedom; and he brought to its support that manly energy and firmness, which never failed him in the hour of danger. He was among the foremost to compel the stamp-masters, appointed in Connecticut, to relinquish their odious office; and, when this was accomplished, became one of a committee appointed to confer with the governor of the colony upon the subject. He was asked by Governor Fitch what he, as chief executive magistrate, was to do, if the stamped paper should be sent him by the orders of the king? "Lock it up," replied Putnam, "and give us the key; then, if you think proper, to screen yourself from responsibility, prohibit us from entering the room where it is deposited; we will send it safely back." "But should I refuse you admission?" "In five minutes your house will be levelled with the dust."

Colonel Humphreys remarks, that the report of this conversation was believed to be one reason why the

stamped paper was never sent to Connecticut. The repeal of the obnoxious act, in 1766, having somewhat tranquillized the popular feeling, Colonel Putnam returned once more to his agricultural labors. They were interrupted by two accidents, by one of which he was deprived of a portion of the thumb of his right hand, while the other was attended by a compound fracture of the thigh, which made him slightly lame for the remainder of his life.

General Lyman, whose name has been already mentioned, had been deputed by the surviving officers and soldiers of the expedition to Havana, to receive in England the portion of their prize-money remaining due. He also acted as the agent of a company, who were solicitous to procure a grant of land upon the Mississippi. After a delay of some years, the application for the grant was successful; and, in 1770, General Lyman, accompanied by Colonel Putnam and two or three other persons, went from Connecticut up the Mississippi to explore the tract. Putnam placed some laborers on his portion, but did not himself remain or derive any permanent advantage from the undertaking. General Lyman revisited Connecticut with the rest of the party, but soon returned to Natchez, where he formed a settlement, and remained until his death.

In the interval between this period and the beginning of hostilities, Colonel Putnam had occasion frequently to visit Boston. He was familiarly known to General Gage, Lord Percy, and the other principal British officers, and often conversed with them on the subject of the controversy. Whenever he was questioned as to the part which he proposed to take, his answer was that he should be found on his country's side, and stand ready to abide the issue. It was intimated to him, that one acquainted as he was with the military power of Great Britain, could hardly think it unequal to the conquest of a country unprovided with any regular forces, magazines, or ships of war; and his reply to this suggestion is full of sense and judgement. If the united forces of Great Britain and the colonies had required six years to con-

quer Canada, he thought it would not be easy for British troops alone to subdue a country, with which Canada bore no comparison; and he believed the consciousness of a sacred cause would give vigor to the efforts of the colonists. Being asked, whether an army of five thousand veterans might not march from one end of the continent to the other; "No doubt," he said, "if they conducted themselves properly, and paid for what they wanted; but, should they attempt it in a hostile manner, the American women would knock them on the head with their ladles."*

On the 19th of April, 1775, the hour of trial came. Colonel Putnam was laboring in the field, when the news of the battle of Lexington was brought to him; he left his plough standing in the furrow, and without even waiting to exchange his clothes, rode with the utmost expedition to the scene of action. On the 21st, he attended a council of war at Cambridge. The Assembly of Connecticut was then in session. He was summoned back by that body to confer with them respecting the preparations for the campaign; and, when the object was effected, received a commission as brigadier-general, and returned to the camp, leaving orders for the troops to follow as rapidly as possible. These, to the number of three thousand, were soon upon their march.

On the 21st of May, General Ward was commissioned as major-general and commander-in-chief of the troops of Massachusetts; and his orders were obeyed by all the officers of other colonies within the province. General Putnam was first in rank among the officers of Connecticut; but the troops from the various colonies were distributed among the several stations. The headquarters of the commander-in-chief were at Cambridge, with

* There are some other weapons to which the women might possibly have resorted in such an emergency. In 1684, Cranfield, the governor of New Hampshire, undertook to tax the people of that colony without their consent, but found it impossible to enforce the imposition. The provost, to whom the tax-bills were committed for collection, testified, that the people of Exeter drove the sheriff away with cudgels; the women having prepared red-hot spits, with boiling water, by way of increasing the warmth of his welcome.

eight thousand Massachusetts troops, and one thousand from Connecticut; the latter, with two other regiments, being stationed at Inman's Farm, an advanced position, under the immediate command of General Putnam. The right wing of the army, consisting of two thousand men from Massachusetts, one thousand from Rhode Island, and the remainder of the Connecticut troops, was at Roxbury, under the command of Brigadier-General Thomas; and the left was composed of one thousand from New Hampshire under Colonels Stark and Reed, who were at Medford, and another detachment of the same troops, together with three companies of Gerrish's regiment, at Chelsea. General Ward had with him five companies of artillery, and General Thomas three or four. The British army in Boston, at the close of the month of May, consisted of ten thousand men.

Perhaps there was no officer in the American army, eminent as many of them certainly were, who enjoyed more of the public confidence than General Putnam. Several of them had become distinguished in the old French War, and there were some, whose capacity to conduct large military operations was perhaps superior to his; but there was no one of greater promptness and energy in action, or who had acquired a higher reputation for adventurous bravery.

In the course of the month of May, it was determined to remove the cattle from the islands in Boston harbor, in order to cut off the supplies of the enemy, who were blockaded in the town. For this purpose, three or four hundred men were detached, and succeeded in removing them from Hog Island and Noddle's Island. A skirmish was thus occasioned, in which several of the marines, who had been stationed to guard them, were killed. The Americans were fired on by the British vessels in the harbor, and a reenforcement of three hundred men, with two pieces of artillery, was ordered to support them. One of the armed vessels, a schooner, which lay near the shore, was set on fire by the artillery, and destroyed; and a second was towed beyond the range of the shot by the boats of the fleet. The affair was not of

much importance, except as it served to inspire confidence in the troops, who found that they could encounter the enemy with success. On this occasion, General Warren accompanied Putnam as a volunteer.

The spirit of the Americans was high, and they were impatient to be led into action; but their disorganized and unprovided state rendered such a step very hazardous. Many of the officers and men, who had been accustomed only to the irregular service of rangers, could not appreciate the necessity of long and thorough discipline; and the general voice of the people called for some decisive measures.

General Putnam was himself desirous, that the advantage of this spirit should not be lost by inaction; and he urged the necessity, not of hazarding a general engagement, but of some partial action, in which the Americans, under cover of intrenchments, might cause the enemy to feel their skill as marksmen; it being a favorite maxim with him, that, if the militia could find protection for their legs, they were quite indifferent to the welfare of the rest of their persons. The same opinion was maintained by Colonel Prescott and other veteran officers, and the subject was considered with much earnestness in the council of war.

General Ward and General Warren, on the other hand, were apprehensive that the issue of an action could not fail to prove disastrous; the supply of ammunition was very limited; and they feared that it must terminate in a general engagement, in which the Americans would be defeated. But the bolder counsel at length prevailed. The Committee of Safety had received information, that it was the intention of the British to occupy the heights of Dorchester and Charlestown; and the necessity of anticipating them in at least a portion of this scheme was obvious to all. The Committee therefore recommended to the council of war, to take possession of Bunker's Hill without delay. The heights of Charlestown had already been examined by Putnam and other officers, and the advantage of the position fully ascertained.

For the information of those who are unacquainted

with the place, it may be proper to remark, that the peninsula of Charlestown is somewhat more than a mile in length from east to west, and eleven hundred yards across from north to south; washed on the north by Mystic River, and on the south by Charles River, which approach within about one hundred yards of each other at the Neck of the peninsula. The eastern part is separated from Boston by a narrow channel. From the Neck rises Bunker's Hill, to the height of a little more than one hundred feet, terminating in a tongue of land, which extends for a considerable distance along the shore of Mystic River, about twenty feet above the water. The summit of Breed's Hill, which is about sixty feet in height, rises in a southeasterly direction from Bunker's Hill, towards Boston; between this and the tongue of land, on the north, is a slough, and the village of Charlestown lay on the south, on the declivity and at the base. Morton's Point is the northeastern extremity of the peninsula, and the hill of the same name, thirty-five feet high, rises near it.

The detachment intended for the expedition, consisting of about one thousand men, under the immediate command of Colonel Prescott, were assembled on Cambridge Common at an early hour on the evening of the 16th of June, where prayers were offered by the President of Harvard College. General Putnam accompanied the detachment. They moved at nightfall through Cambridge and across the Neck of the peninsula, Colonel Prescott, dressed in his calico frock, leading the way. A question now arose respecting the height which was intended to be fortified. Bunker's Hill had been designated for the purpose by the Committee, while Breed's Hill appeared better suited to the object of the expedition; but it is probable, that the former name was usually applied indiscriminately to both the heights. So much time was consumed by the discussion, that it was nearly midnight before it was concluded to erect the principal work on Breed's Hill, and a subsidiary one on Bunker's Hill for the protection of the rear, and as a rallying-point in the event of their being driven from the other.

A redoubt, about eight rods square, was accordingly laid out, on the summit of Breed's Hill, with a breastwork, extending from its northeastern angle down the northern declivity to the slough. Before the action, the American line was extended to the left across the tongue of land to Mystic River. This was done by General Putnam, who ordered Captain Knowlton, just as the enemy were landing, to take post with some Connecticut troops behind a rail fence, running in the direction already mentioned, about two hundred yards in the rear of the breastwork; and an imperfect intrenchment was made by disposing other fences in a parallel line and throwing some newly-mown grass between.

While the men were engaged in their labors, on the breastwork and redoubt, General Putnam returned to Cambridge, to procure a reenforcement; but the report of a sudden cannonade induced him to repair without hesitation to his post. The operations of the detachment were unknown to the British, until daylight, when a heavy fire was opened on them by the ships and batteries. At the suggestion of some of his officers, who were anxious that the men should be relieved, Colonel Prescott convened a council of war; expressing, at the same time, his aversion to the proposition, and insisting, that, as they had endured the labor, they were entitled to the honor of the victory.

Putnam again returned to Cambridge for provisions and a reenforcement, and equally without effect. Colonel Prescott now called another council of war, still refusing to ask to be relieved; but he consented to apply to General Ward for the aid which had been twice asked in vain. Movements had already been observed among the British troops in Boston, indicating their design to prepare for an attack. By eleven o'clock, General Ward had issued his orders to the troops of Colonels Stark and Reed at Medford, to proceed to the scene of action; but, before this fact could be ascertained, all possible preparation had been made to repel the enemy.

Putnam had withdrawn a detachment from the redoubt to throw up the contemplated work on Bunker's Hill,

a position by which Breed's Hill was completely commanded ; and he resolved to make another effort, before the preparations of the enemy could be completed, to procure an additional force from Cambridge. He repaired thither, for the third time, across the Neck, which was now swept by the fire of a man-of-war and floating batteries ; but, learning there what orders had been issued, he hastened back to Charlestown.

The expected reenforcement at length arrived ; and Putnam, reserving a portion of them to aid in the construction of the work on Bunker's Hill, ordered Stark and Reed to join the Connecticut troops at the rail fence, with the residue. Colonel Prescott had on his part been indefatigable in his preparations, and all were anxiously awaiting the approach of the enemy.

Never was the fearful spectacle of battle presented to the eye, under circumstances more striking, or of deeper interest. Every movement of the troops on either side was distinctly open to the view of thousands, who watched from the neighboring roofs and spires the changes of the scene. On the one hand, the hopes of freedom depended on the issue ; on the other, there was a deep solicitude to support the honor of the British name. The day was beautifully clear and cloudless.

At noon, twenty-eight barges, containing four battalions of infantry and twenty companies of light-infantry and grenadiers, with six pieces of artillery, moved in perfect order across the channel, their brilliant arms flashing in the sun of June. They landed at Morton's Point, and were soon joined by a second detachment. Shortly after, a third detachment reached the shore, near the east end of Breed's Hill. The united force consisted of about five thousand men.

A fire was now opened on the American lines by the British artillery at Morton's Hill ; and it was answered by a few pieces from the redoubt, which soon became useless and were carried to the rear. As one of the captains of artillery was retreating over Bunker's Hill, Putnam ordered him back to his post, threatening him with death if he should disobey. He returned ; but the

pieces were deserted, and his men took their stations in the line.

A single horseman rode at full speed over Bunker's Hill, and encountered General Putnam. It was General Warren; and Putnam offered to receive his orders. Warren replied, that he came only as a volunteer, and desired to know where his services would be most useful. Putnam pointed to the redoubt, remarking that he would be covered there. "I came not," said Warren, "for the purpose of security; tell me where the onset will be most severe." "Go, then, to the redoubt," said Putnam; "Prescott is there, and will do his duty; if that can be defended, the day is ours." Warren rode forward to the redoubt, where he was received with loud acclamations. Again, he was offered the command, by Colonel Prescott, but still declined it; observing, that he was happy to study the art of war under such an officer.

At three o'clock, the British line was formed, and the troops moved in perfect and imposing order towards the rail fence and redoubt. Putnam hastened from his post on Bunker's Hill, rode along the lines, and ordered the men to reserve their fire till the enemy were within eight rods, and then to prove their wellknown skill as marksmen; the same order was enforced by Prescott, Stark, and all the veteran officers. As the British were advancing, all within those low intrenchments was silent as death. Just as the enemy were upon them, the signal was given; a close and deadly fire blazed along the lines, and the front ranks of the enemy were swept down before it. Rank followed rank, but in vain; the order was given to retreat, and a shout of victory rang through the American line.

In the mean time, reenforcements from Cambridge reached the Neck, but were reluctant to encounter the enfilading fire. When the British had retreated, Putnam hurried to the spot to bring them over, riding backward and forward several times, while the earth was thrown up by the balls around him; but few could be persuaded to follow.

The British commander had now rallied and reorganized his men; a second time he led them against the Americans, who were ordered to reserve their fire, till the enemy should be nearer than before. Charlestown was at this time set on fire, and, as the troops were advancing, the flames ascended on their left. They hurried on, firing with the coolness and precision of a holiday review. Once more the American lines were still, until the enemy came to the appointed distance; again the fire blazed forth with the same fatal precision as before, and the ground in front of the intrenchments was covered with the dead and wounded.

Nearly a thousand of the enemy, with a vast proportion of officers, had now fallen; and the order to retreat was given for the second time. Major Small, the old friend of Putnam, was standing alone; the muskets were levelled at him, when Putnam threw them up with his sword, and he retired unhurt. But the ammunition of the Americans was at length exhausted. Colonel Prescott ordered his men to club their muskets, and hurl the stones of the parapet against the enemy, should they venture on a third attack; while Putnam galloped to the rear, and labored in vain to bring up the scattered reinforcements.

The British threw aside their knapsacks, and were ordered to reserve their fire, and trust to the bayonet. They then concentrated their force on the redoubt and breastwork, where every effort was vainly made to repel them. Prescott, unprovided with bayonets and exhausted of his ammunition, at length gave the reluctant order to retreat; and his troops moved slowly down the western declivity of the hill. It was at this moment, that the gallant Warren fell. The American left continued to repel the enemy, but finding their flank opened by the retreat of the right, were compelled in their turn to retire. Putnam indignantly urged the troops to make a stand upon Bunker's Hill. He took his station between them and the enemy, exposed to the hottest of the fire; but the men were unable to encounter the British bayonet. The Americans continued their retreat over the Neck to

Prospect and Winter Hills, where they took up their position for the night.

In presenting this sketch of a battle, so important to the cause of freedom, it was of course impossible to enter very minutely into the conduct and services of others, who shared with General Putnam the glory of the day; and this has been rendered unnecessary by the diligent research of Colonel Swett, who has written a very interesting account of its details.

We have thus far refrained from saying any thing of the particular command allotted to Putnam on this occasion. In the work to which we have just referred, he is mentioned as having the general control and superintendence of the expedition; and this opinion is supported by the following considerations. He was the only general officer who was present at the battle; and it is very improbable, that the various detachments should have been left without a commander of the whole. He appears also to have acted, throughout the battle and the previous arrangements for it, in this capacity.

Such was the purport of his own constant declarations; and if any evidence were wanting of his personal honor, it may be found in the language of President Dwight respecting him. "His word was regarded as an ample security for any thing for which it was pledged; and his uprightness commanded absolute confidence." On the other hand, the orderly book of General Ward is silent on the subject of the expedition, and no orders for its conduct and command are now to be discovered. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to speak with certainty upon the question. However it may be determined, there can be no doubt, that the part taken by General Putnam was in the highest degree important and effective.

Shortly after the battle of Bunker's Hill, it was proposed to Putnam by Sir William Howe, through the medium of Major Small, to accept the commission of major-general in the British service. A large pecuniary offer was at the same time made to him. It is needless to say, that these offers were indignantly rejected.

CHAPTER V.

Putnam is appointed Major-General in the Continental Army.—Remains at Cambridge till the Evacuation of Boston.—Commands at New York.—Suggests a Mode of obstructing the Navigation of the Hudson, to prevent the Enemy's Vessels from ascending it.—Commands on Long Island.—New York evacuated.—Retreat through New Jersey.—Putnam stationed at Philadelphia, and afterwards at Princeton.—Anecdotes.

ON the 15th of June, George Washington was unanimously elected by Congress general and commander-in-chief of the American army; and Generals Ward, Lee, Schuyler, and Putnam were appointed to act as major-generals under him. He arrived at Cambridge on the 2d of July, and next day entered upon his most momentous and responsible command. He had no personal acquaintance with Putnam before this period; but he found him bold, energetic, and single-hearted, frank and generous in his disposition, and diligent and faithful in the discharge of all his duties. "You seem, General Putnam," said he, after examining a work which had been erected with great expedition, "to have the faculty of infusing your own industrious spirit into all the workmen you employ."

In one of his letters from Cambridge, addressed to the President of Congress, he speaks of Putnam as "a most valuable man, and a fine executive officer;" and the commendation of Washington was never thoughtlessly bestowed. These are the very words which the reader of Putnam's history would probably consider best suited to describe his personal and military character; and they are important, also, as indicating the keen glance with which Washington penetrated the qualities of those around him. In General Putnam's own sphere, which was that

of prompt and chivalrous action, he had no superior; and it costs us nothing to admit, that, in the conduct of war upon a very extensive scale, he might be excelled by some of his fellow-laborers in the cause of freedom.

During the remainder of this season, the condition of the army was such, as to render it inexpedient to venture upon hostile operations; there was little or no powder in the magazines, and the troops were in every respect so deficient and ill provided, that General Washington, as he himself declared, was compelled to use art to conceal their situation from his own officers, as well as from the enemy. Meantime the people of the country, not knowing or unable to appreciate these difficulties, were constantly expecting some decisive blow; and on the 22d of December, Congress resolved, that, if General Washington and his council should be of opinion, that a successful attack could be made upon the troops in Boston, he should make it, "notwithstanding the town and property in it might thereby be destroyed."

The harbor was frozen over by the middle of February, and Washington himself was then desirous of hazarding a general assault; but nearly all his officers were hostile to the scheme, and it was reluctantly abandoned. They recommended, however, in partial compliance with his suggestions, that preparations should be made to occupy the heights of Dorchester; a measure, which could scarcely fail to be followed by a battle. It was determined, also, that, if a sufficient number of the enemy should march to the assault of that position, materially to reduce the garrison of Boston, a body of four thousand men, under the command of General Putnam, should land in the west part of the town, and force their way to the Neck at Roxbury, where the troops from that quarter were to join them.

The heights of Dorchester were accordingly occupied; but the plan formed by the enemy to carry that position was defeated by a storm, and, on the 17th of March, the town was evacuated. When the first intelligence of the preparations of the British for departure was received at Cambridge, several regiments under the

command of Putnam were embarked in boats, and dropped down the river. On landing at its mouth, the fact of the departure of the British was fully ascertained, and a detachment was ordered to take possession of the town. Another detachment marched in at the same time from Roxbury, and the whole were placed under the command of Putnam, who proceeded to possess himself of all the important posts.

Early in January, General Washington had been informed, that an expedition was fitting out at Boston, with the view to take possession of New York; and he ordered General Lee to repair immediately thither, with such volunteers as he could assemble on his march, and to make the best arrangements for its defence, that circumstances would admit. General Lee was also instructed to disarm all disaffected persons, and to examine the state of the fortifications on the North River, in order to secure them from the danger of surprise.

On his arrival at New York, it was determined to fortify some commanding position in the city, to erect batteries at Hell Gate for the security of the entrance of the harbor, as well as for the protection of the communication with Long Island, where a fortified camp was proposed to be established, and to strengthen and garrison the defences of the Highlands.

It soon appeared, that the expedition already mentioned was destined farther south; and Lee was ordered from New York by Congress, on the 1st of March, to take command of the southern department of the army. After the evacuation of Boston, General Washington, deeming the preservation of New York as of the last importance to the cause, sent on a portion of his troops to that city; and, on the 29th of March, General Putnam was ordered to assume the command at that station, and to execute the plan of defence, which had been projected by General Lee.

General Putnam, on his arrival at New York, devoted himself, with the utmost assiduity, to the charge with which he was intrusted. The British fleet had been thus far amply supplied with fresh provisions from the shore;

a species of accommodation, which he forthwith made the subject of a pointed prohibition; and the good effects of this step were soon exhibited by the departure of some of the vessels from the harbor. By the middle of April, General Washington arrived with the greater portion of his army, and entered on the chief command; but the preparations for defence were still prosecuted by General Putnam. On the 21st of May, Washington, in obedience to the call of Congress, went to Philadelphia to confer with them respecting the condition of affairs; during his absence, General Putnam was commander of the army.

The judgement of Washington had easily foreseen, that New York and the Hudson would be the first objects of the attention of the enemy. Early in July, General Howe, who had sailed for Halifax after evacuating Boston, returned and landed with his army at Staten Island; where he was soon joined by a powerful armament from England, under the command of Lord Howe, his brother. Before the arrival of the squadron, General Washington, under the direction of Congress, had instructed General Putnam to prepare firerafts and gondolas to prevent the ships from entering the New York Bay or Narrows; and he was also charged with the supervision of various other schemes, designed for a similar object.

The plan of destroying the British fleet by means of fireships, had been suggested to Congress by a Mr. Anderson. General Putnam himself projected a novel species of *chevaux de frise* to obstruct the channel. Two ships, about seventy feet distant from each other, connected by the sterns with large pieces of timber, were ordered to be sunk with their bows towards the shore. But neither of these plans was ultimately successful; the *chevaux de frise* were broken by the ships of war, and an attempt made with the fireships to destroy the vessels that had passed up the river, was followed only by the burning of a single tender.

Another experiment was made, under the eye of General Putnam; with a singular machine, which was invent-

ed by David Bushnell, of Connecticut. It was a boat, so constructed as to be capable of being propelled at any depth below the surface of the water, and of being elevated or depressed at pleasure; to this was attached a magazine of powder, designed to be secured by a screw to the bottom of a ship; when the magazine should be disengaged from the boat, certain machinery was to be set in motion, which would cause it to explode at any time desired. The whole was to be managed by a single person, stationed in the boat. Mr. Bushnell, the inventor, was too feeble to undertake its management himself, but had taught the secret to his brother, who chanced to be ill at the time when the British fleet arrived.

His place was supplied by a sergeant of the army, who was instructed to manage the machine as well as time and circumstances would permit. Late in the evening he set forth upon his expedition, and sailed directly underneath the *Eagle* man-of-war, the flag ship of the British admiral; but the screw with which he was to penetrate the copper sheathing, struck some iron plates, near the rudder; the tide was strong, and the inexperience of the sergeant prevented him from applying the proper remedy to remove the difficulty, before the day began to dawn. He therefore abandoned the magazine to its fate, and reached the shore, where General Putnam was anxiously awaiting the issue of the enterprise. A prodigious explosion followed at some distance from the ship, to the infinite consternation and perplexity of all who were unacquainted with the secret; but various circumstances occurred to prevent a repetition of the experiment.

As the safety of New York essentially depended on the possession of Long Island, a body of troops was early stationed on the peninsula of Brooklyn, where a camp had been marked out and fortified. This was expected to be, as it proved, the first object of the enemy's attack. The works had been erected under the supervision of General Greene, who alone possessed a thorough knowledge of the posts and of the routes by which the British would probably approach; but he was unfortunately taken ill, and the command devolved on

General Sullivan. The British army landed on the island on the 22d of August, and it became certain that an engagement must soon take place. On the 23d, General Putnam was ordered with reinforcements to take the command at Brooklyn; but the time intervening between his appointment and the battle was too short to permit him to obtain the essential information, to which we have above alluded. The British army was now arranged in the following order. Lord Cornwallis, with the right wing, was at Flatland; the centre, under General De Heister, was at Flatbush; the left, commanded by General Grant, extended to the western shore; the centre being about four miles, and the right and left wings about six miles, distant from the American lines at Brooklyn. Besides the direct road leading from Flatbush to Brooklyn, there was another which led more circuitously by the way of Bedford. A strong redoubt had been erected by the Americans on the former, and a detachment was posted on the other; another detachment was also stationed to guard the passes by the western shore. General Putnam appears to have expected, that the principal attack would be made in the last of these directions.

On the morning of the 27th, General Clinton led the British van on the road to Bedford, designing to turn the American left, while De Heister and Grant advanced at the same time from their respective positions. Lord Stirling, with two regiments, was ordered by General Putnam to repel the corps of Grant; General Sullivan advanced on the direct road leading to Flatbush; and the American left, which consisted of two regiments, under the command of their respective colonels, occupied the road leading from that place to Bedford. While General Clinton was effecting his main purpose of gaining the rear of the American left, attacks were made by Grant and De Heister on the right and centre, in order to withdraw their attention from this most decisive movement. The purpose of Clinton was at length effected; the British centre, which had hitherto advanced only to divert the attention of the Americans, now attacked the troops of Sullivan; and these, discovering the movement

of Clinton upon their left, were broken, and fled, leaving their general a prisoner.

Lord Stirling, in the mean time, whose situation had been rendered extremely critical by the defeat of the other divisions, gave the order to retire; and, to cover more effectually the retreat of the main body of his detachment, charged a corps of the British under Cornwallis with spirit, and for a time with success; but was at length compelled to surrender. The whole American force engaged in this action, amounted to about five thousand men, while the British army exceeded twice that number; but the loss of the Americans was comparatively very great. It was shown by the result of the battle, that the camp of Brooklyn was no longer tenable; and, on the night of the 29th, while the British were encamped within six hundred yards of the works, the troops were withdrawn to New York, by General Washington himself, with so great celerity and skill, that nearly all the artillery and stores were saved. The movement was undiscovered by the enemy, until half an hour after the works had been evacuated, though the noise of their spades and pickaxes was distinctly heard within the American lines.

It was now obvious, that the city of New York must be sooner or later abandoned; but the principal officers of the army were solicitous to retain possession of it, as long as might be in their power. The army was arranged in three divisions; one of which, under General Putnam, was stationed in the city, another at Kingsbridge, and the third occupied an intermediate position, so that it could be readily brought to the support of either.

On the 12th of September, a council of war came to the resolution to evacuate the city, and the events of the few succeeding days demonstrated, that this measure was quite indispensable. Three days after, some British ships ascended the North River as high as Bloomingdale, while Sir Henry Clinton, with four thousand men, landed on the eastern shore of the island, at Kipp's Bay. Their landing was covered by the fire of five ships of war. The new levies stationed to defend the works at

this position fled, without waiting for the enemy; and two brigades of Putnam's division, which had been ordered to support them, imitated their example; breaking at the approach of about sixty of the British, and flying without firing a single shot. General Washington met them in their flight, and vainly used every possible effort to rally them; he was left alone within eighty yards of the enemy; but he refused to fly, and was rescued only by the care of some of his attendants, who seized his horse's bridle, and turned him from the field. Orders were immediately given to secure the heights of Haerlem; and they were at once occupied by the fugitives and the other troops in the vicinity.

The main road leading from the city to Kingsbridge was in possession of the enemy, and General Putnam resolved to secure the retreat of his division by the route of Bloomingdale. The manner in which it was effected will be best described in the words of an eyewitness.

"Having myself," says Colonel Humphreys, "been a volunteer in his division, and acting adjutant to the last regiment that left the city, I had frequent opportunities, that day, of beholding him, (Putnam,) for the purpose of issuing orders and encouraging the troops, flying, on his horse covered with foam, wherever his presence was most necessary. Without his extraordinary exertions, the guards must have been inevitably lost; and it is probable the entire corps would have been cut in pieces.

"When we were not far from Bloomingdale, an aide-de-camp came from him at full speed, to inform that a column of British infantry was descending upon our right. Our rear was soon fired upon, and the colonel of our regiment, whose order was just communicated for the front to file off to the left, was killed upon the spot. With no other loss we joined the army, after dark, upon the heights of Haerlem. Before our brigades came in, we were given up for lost by all our friends. So critical indeed was our situation, and so narrow the gap by which we had escaped, that, the instant we had passed, the enemy closed it by extending their line from river to river."

The enemy's shipping having passed up the North River, notwithstanding the obstructions, the American army was withdrawn from the island of New York to the neighborhood of the White Plains. On the 28th of October, the British forces advanced in order of battle, and a brigade of Hessians was detached to dislodge a corps of about sixteen hundred militia from Chatterton's Hill, where they were stationed to cover the right flank of the army. After a sharp encounter, the Hessians remained in possession of the hill. Major-General Putnam, who had been ordered to support the militia, met them in full retreat, and it was then too late to attempt to retake the post; but no attack was made upon the camp of Washington, who withdrew, on the night of the 1st of November, to the heights in the rear of his first camp.

A few days after, General Putnam was sent across the Hudson, to provide against a descent of the enemy upon New Jersey; and on the 13th, General Washington passed the river with about five thousand men, and took post at Hackinsac. And, when Fort Washington and Fort Lee had fallen, began the retreat of the "phantom of an army," as it was emphatically called by Hamilton, through New Jersey; when Washington was compelled to face a powerful army with scarce three thousand men; unprovided with all that makes a soldier's life endurable, and this too in the depth of winter, and abandoned by General Lee, to whom the command on the east bank of the Hudson had unfortunately been confided.

There was no darker period in the history of the Revolution; scarcely any spirit, but that of Washington, was unshaken by the accumulated weight of difficulty and disaster; nor could he, without deep emotion, witness the suffering, which he had no power to relieve.

Throughout this season of peril, until the army had crossed the Delaware, General Putnam was at his commander's side; and it may be well imagined, that he would have been one of the last to intermit his efforts in the almost hopeless cause. The passage of the Delaware was effected on the 8th of December; it became now all-important to prevent the enemy from occupying

Philadelphia, and General Putnam was ordered to make immediate provision for its fortification. Congress had already resolved that it should be defended to the last extremity.

At this time an incident occurred, which strikingly illustrates the foresight and sagacity of Washington. A report had been circulated, that Congress was about to separate; and, on the 11th of December, it was resolved by that assembly, that the commander-in-chief "be desired to contradict this scandalous suggestion of the enemy, this Congress having a better opinion of the spirit and vigor of the army, and of the good people of these States, than to suppose it can be necessary to disperse; nor will they adjourn from the city of Philadelphia in the present state of affairs until the last necessity shall direct it." This resolution was forwarded on the same day to Washington, who was at once convinced that its publication would be attended with evil consequences, and took upon himself the responsibility of suppressing it in the next day's orders.

In a letter addressed on the 12th to the president of Congress he says, "I am persuaded, if the subject is taken up and reconsidered, that Congress will concur with me in sentiment. I doubt not, but there are some, who have propagated the report; but what if they have? Their remaining in or leaving Philadelphia must be governed by circumstances and events. If their departure should become necessary, it will be right; on the other hand, if there should not be a necessity for it, they will remain, and their continuance will show the report to be the production of calumny and falsehood. In a word, sir, I conceive it a matter, that may be as well disregarded; and that the removal or staying of Congress, depending entirely on events, should not have been the subject of a resolve."

Well was it for Congress, that their resolution was suppressed by Washington; for, on the self-same day on which he wrote, that body adjourned to meet again in Baltimore on the 20th of December. It appears, that General Putnam, who had entered on the command, and

General Mifflin, his predecessor in the station, had been summoned by Congress to a conference; and it was in consequence of their judicious suggestions, that the resolve for an adjournment was adopted.*

“Upon the salvation of Philadelphia,” was the earnest language of Washington, “our cause almost depends;” and his selection of General Putnam to command it at this crisis denotes the confidence reposed by the commander-in-chief in his energy and skill. Nor were his expectations disappointed; General Putnam entered on his duties with his usual diligence, forwarded with all his power the construction of the fortifications, and labored with untiring zeal to reconcile contending factions, and to animate the citizens to efforts for their own defence.

While he was thus employed, General Washington was preparing to attack the enemy at Trenton. It was a part of his original plan to call Putnam to cooperate in the enterprise, with the troops at Philadelphia and a corps of the Pennsylvania militia; but he was induced to change this plan by an apprehension of an insurrection among the royalists within the city. General Putnam had therefore no share in the victory at Trenton, nor in that of Princeton, by which it was succeeded.

So great was the effect of these enterprises on the enemy, that Washington began to entertain the hope of driving them beyond the limits of New Jersey. On the 5th of January, 1777, he ordered General Putnam to march with the troops under his command to Crosswick, a few miles southeast of Trenton, using the utmost precaution to guard against surprise, and laboring to create an impression that his force was twice as great as it actually was. The object of the commander-in-chief was partially accomplished by the concentration of the British forces at New Brunswick and Amboy; and General Putnam was soon after ordered to take post at Princeton, where he passed the remainder of the winter. This position was scarcely fifteen miles distant from the enemy's camp at New Brunswick; but the troops of Putnam at no time

* See *Writings of Washington*, Sparks's edition, Vol. IV. p. 210.

exceeded a few hundred, and were once fewer in number than the miles of frontier he was expected to guard.

Captain Macpherson, a Scotch officer of the seventeenth British regiment, had received in the battle of Princeton a severe wound, which was thought likely to prove fatal. When General Putnam reached that place, he found that it had been deemed inexpedient to provide medical aid and other comforts for one who was likely to require them for so short a period; but by his orders the captain was attended with the utmost care, and at length recovered. He was warm in the expression of his gratitude; and one day, when Putnam, in reply to his inquiries, had assured him that he was a Yankee, avowed that he had not believed it possible for any human being but a Scotchman to be so kind and generous.

Indeed, the benevolence of the general was one day put to a somewhat delicate test. The patient, when his recovery was considered doubtful, solicited that a friend in the British army at New Brunswick might be permitted to come and aid him in the preparation of his will. Full sorely perplexed was General Putnam, by his desire, on the one hand, to gratify the wishes of his prisoner, and a natural reluctance, on the other, to permit the enemy to spy out the nakedness of his camp. His good nature at length prevailed, but not at the expense of his discretion; and a flag of truce was despatched, with orders not to return with the captain's friend until after dark.

By the time of his arrival, lights were displayed in all the apartments of the College Hall, and in all the vacant houses in the town; and the army, which then consisted of fifty effective men, were marched about with remarkable celerity, sometimes in close column, and sometimes in detachments, with unusual pomp and circumstance, around the quarters of the captain. It was subsequently ascertained, as we are assured by Colonel Humphreys, that the force of Putnam was computed by the framer of the will, on his return to the British camp, to consist, on the lowest estimate, of five thousand men.

During his command at Princeton, General Putnam was employed, with activity and much success, in afford-

ing protection to the persons in his neighborhood, who remained faithful to the American cause. They were exposed to great danger, from the violent incursions of the loyalists; and constant vigilance was required, in order to guard against the depredations of the latter. Through the whole winter there raged a war of skirmishes. On the 17th of February, Colonel Nielson, with a party of one hundred and fifty militia, was sent by General Putnam to surprise a small corps of loyalists who were fortifying themselves at Lawrence's Neck. They were of the corps of Cortlandt Skinner, of New Jersey, a brigadier-general of Provincials in the British service. We know not how to relate the result of this affair more briefly than it is given in the following extract from a letter addressed by Putnam to the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania, on the day after it occurred.

"Yesterday evening, Colonel Nielson, with a hundred and fifty men, at Lawrence's Neck, attacked sixty men of Cortlandt Skinner's brigade, commanded by the enemy's renowned land pilot, Richard Stockton, and took the whole prisoners; among them the major, a captain, and three subalterns, with seventy stand of arms. Fifty of the Bedford Pennsylvania riflemen behaved like veterans."

On another occasion, he detached Major Smith with a few riflemen, against a foraging party of the enemy, and followed him with the rest of his forces; but, before he came up, the party had been captured by the riflemen. These, and other similar incidents, may appear individually as of little moment; but before the close of the winter, General Putnam had thus taken nearly a thousand prisoners, and had accomplished the more important object of keeping the disaffected in continual awe.

CHAPTER VI.

Putnam commands in the Highlands.—Operations during the Campaign.—The British ascend the Hudson.—General Putnam superintends the Construction of the Fortifications at West Point.—His perilous Adventure at Horseneck.—Retires from the Army in consequence of a Paralytic Attack.—His Death.—His military and personal Character.

IN the month of May, 1777, General Putnam was ordered by Washington to assume the chief command of the army of the Highlands, on Hudson's River; and was particularly charged with the execution of a plan, devised by Knox and Greene, to obstruct the passage of the enemy's ships in the river. Much uncertainty rested at this time on the ultimate purposes of the British generals, Burgoyne and Howe; and it became necessary for the Americans, with forces quite inadequate to the purpose, to prepare for the defence of the three important points of Ticonderoga, Philadelphia, and the Highlands.

Sometimes there was reason to believe that Burgoyne and Howe intended to unite their forces on the Hudson River; at others, that the troops of the former would be transported by water for the purpose of reenforcing General Howe, without advancing from Canada; and, for a considerable period, the destination of the force of Howe himself, who sailed with the British fleet from New York towards the close of July, was wrapped in equal mystery. As circumstances appeared to favor either of these suppositions, the American forces at different stations, including the greater part of that of Putnam, were detached in different directions. All that remained for him to do was to stand ready to execute the orders of Washington, and to transmit such intelligence of the enemy's movements as came into his posses-

sion; and he attended to these objects with the activity and vigilance required by the exigency.

On the 3d of August, Sir Henry Clinton, who commanded the British force in the city of New York, sent up a flag of truce to General Putnam at Peekskill. Edmund Palmer, a lieutenant of a Tory regiment, had been detected in the American camp, and it was the purpose of Clinton to claim him as an officer in the British service. The following was the reply sent back by Putnam.

“Head Quarters, 7th August, 1777.

“Edmund Palmer, an officer in the enemy’s service, was taken as a spy lurking within our lines; he has been tried as a spy, condemned as a spy, and shall be executed as a spy, and the flag is ordered to depart immediately.

“ISRAEL PUTNAM.

“P. S. He has been accordingly executed.”

A few weeks afterwards, Sir Henry Clinton availed himself of the opportunity afforded by the absence of the main American army, to make an incursion into the interior of New Jersey. On the 12th of September, with a force consisting of about two thousand men, in four divisions, he proceeded to ravage the country, with little opposition. When General Putnam received intelligence of this movement, he sent General McDougall across the Hudson with fifteen hundred men; but they were too late to overtake the enemy, who returned on the 16th to New York, with considerable booty.

General Putnam himself now devised a plan for attacking the enemy at the four different points of Staten Island, Long Island, Paulus Hook, and the Island of New York, at the same time. He had been encouraged to expect the aid of large bodies of militia from Connecticut, and hoped to derive similar assistance from New Jersey and New York; and thus supported, he entertained no doubt of his ability to succeed in the enterprise.

On the 23d of September, however, he received an urgent letter from Washington, which compelled him to abandon his design. Affairs were assuming a critical

aspect in the neighborhood of Philadelphia; and twenty-five hundred men were summoned to the main army from the force of Putnam, who was instructed to call in the militia to supply their place. For this purpose, he made instant requisition on the governors of Connecticut and New York; but, as no hostile demonstrations appeared, and the militia were impatient of detention at the time of harvest, he discharged such portions of them as had not spontaneously deserted him.

His force now consisted of about fifteen hundred men, stationed at Peekskill, on the east side of the Hudson. The defences of this river had employed much of the attention of General Washington, who relied upon them to arrest the progress of the enemy. Fort Independence was the lowest on the eastern side, just above Peekskill; four or five miles higher, on the opposite bank, were Forts Clinton and Montgomery, and about two miles above, on an island near the eastern shore, was Fort Constitution.

Forts Clinton and Montgomery, which may be considered as one, were regarded as the strongest; and various obstructions, defended by two frigates and a galley, were thrown across the river at their base. The garrison consisted of about six hundred men, under the command of Governor Clinton, of New York. Partly with the view of destroying some military stores collected in the neighborhood, and partly to make a diversion in favor of General Burgoyne, an expedition against these fortresses was undertaken by Sir Henry Clinton.

On the 5th of October, he landed at Verplanck's Point, just below Peekskill, on the east bank of the Hudson, with about three thousand men; and General Putnam retired on their approach to the high grounds in his rear. The next morning, under cover of a fog, a portion of the British crossed the river to Stony Point, and marched unobserved through the mountains in the direction of Forts Montgomery and Clinton. Governor Clinton, at ten o'clock, received the intelligence of their approach, and sent for reenforcements to Putnam, who, believing that Fort Independence was the real object of the enemy,

was engaged, as well as the state of the atmosphere would permit, in reconnoitering their position. The express, sent by Clinton, failed to reach him.*

At five o'clock in the afternoon, both of the forts were assaulted at the same time by the British. They were resolutely defended until dark, when they were entered by the enemy at various points, and a portion of the garrison made prisoners. The greater number, from their familiar knowledge of the mountain passes, and under cover of the night, effected their escape. No intimation of the assault was received at the camp, until it was made known by the firing on the west bank of the river; a reenforcement of five hundred men was then despatched, but, before they could cross the river, the forts were in possession of the enemy.

In consequence of this disaster, Forts Independence and Constitution were evacuated; General Putnam was compelled to retire to Fishkill; the entire command of the river was lost, and the way was thrown open to Sir Henry Clinton to ascend it. In the course of a week, the arrival of the militia having increased the force of Putnam to six thousand men, he retook Peekskill and the mountain passes, and employed the main body of his troops in watching the progress of the British up the river. While on his march with this design, he received intelligence of the capitulation of Burgoyne, and five thousand men were sent to his aid from the northern army; but, before they arrived, the British had returned to New York.

When the fact of the surrender of Burgoyne had been ascertained by Washington, but before he was aware of the return of Clinton to New York, he suggested to Gen-

* This failure is attributed by Chief Justice Marshall to the absence of General Putnam for the purpose of reconnoitering, when the messenger arrived. Colonel Humphreys, who was upon the spot, says, that the letter of Clinton miscarried through the treachery of the messenger; that Putnam, astonished at hearing nothing from the enemy, rode to reconnoiter them, and that he (Colonel Humphreys) being alone at headquarters when the firing began, urged Colonel Wyllys, the senior officer in camp, to send all the men not on duty to Fort Montgomery; which was immediately done, but unhappily too late.

eral Putnam the expediency of uniting his forces with those of Gates, to gain, if possible, the rear of the British, and take possession of the city. This was on the 25th of October, several days after the convention of Saratoga, of which Washington had not yet been informed by Gates.

Five days afterwards, when the commander-in-chief had been apprized of the return of the British to New York, Colonel Hamilton, one of his aids-de-camp, in obedience to the decision of a council of war, was despatched by him to Putnam, to direct him to send forward the brigade he had received from the northern army. Having done this, Hamilton proceeded to the camp of Gates, to instruct him to detach a large portion of his force to the vicinity of Philadelphia. The British force in Philadelphia and its neighborhood amounted to ten thousand men; while that of Washington, the militia included, whose stay was very uncertain, did not much exceed that number.

On his return from Albany, Hamilton addressed a letter to General Putnam, expressing his surprise and regret that the orders of the commander-in-chief had not been complied with. This letter was forwarded to Washington by Putnam, with a complaint that the reflections of Hamilton were illiberal and unjust; that he was unconscious of having omitted any portion of his duty; but that, without explicit orders from Washington, he could not think of remaining at his post, and sending his troops away; the effect of which would certainly be the reenforcement of Howe's army from New York. The course of Hamilton, having been in conformity with the orders of Washington, was fully approved by him, and he expressed dissatisfaction at the delay of General Putnam in complying with his orders.

This is the only instance, in which the conduct of General Putnam gave occasion to the censure of his commander; and it is probably to be attributed to a disposition, which he had long cherished, to attempt a descent upon New York, and a too high estimate of the importance of such an enterprise.

After the departure of the troops, General Putnam moved down the Hudson with a part of his remaining force. When General Dickinson made a descent upon Staten Island, he ordered two brigades to march upon Kingsbridge, in order to divert the attention of the enemy; but their purpose had been penetrated, and the British withdrew at their approach.

He now took post at New Rochelle, and arranged a plan for attacking the forts at Satauket and Huntington, on Long Island; but both were in the mean time evacuated.

This was followed by another enterprise, on a more extensive scale; the object of which was to destroy the materials collected on Long Island for barracks in New York, together with the ships sent thither to obtain wood from Newport, to attack a regiment stationed about eight miles eastward from Jamaica, and to capture or destroy the public stores. The execution of this scheme was intrusted to General Parsons and Colonel Webb; the former of whom succeeded in taking a few prisoners, and in destroying a sloop, together with a large quantity of boards and timber; but the other portions of the enterprise were unsuccessful.

About the middle of December, General Putnam, in obedience to the orders of Washington, returned with his troops to the Highlands, where he spent the winter; a winter, which was passed by Washington in his dreary encampment at Valley Forge; in the course of which he wrote, (and a darker picture of suffering could not easily be drawn,) that he had "no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men unfit for duty, because they were barefoot and otherwise naked." Nor was the situation of Putnam in any respect more enviable; his troops bore their full share of suffering and privation.*

General Washington had never lost sight of the de-

* On the 13th of February, 1778, General Putnam wrote to Washington as follows; "Dubois' regiment is unfit to be ordered on duty, there being not one blanket in the regiment. Very few have either a shoe or a shirt, and most of them have neither stockings, breeches, nor overalls."

fences of the Hudson; and, on the 25th of January, he urged on General Putnam the necessity of placing them on a respectable footing before the spring. All the old works had been demolished by the British. Early in January, the several positions had been examined by Putnam, in company with Governor Clinton and others; all of whom, with the exception of Radière, a French engineer, agreed in selecting West Point, as the best position for a fortress. Colonel Humphreys claims for General Putnam the merit of this selection. However this may be, there can be no doubt that he is entitled to a large portion of the credit, particularly as it was made in opposition to the remonstrances of the engineer, who enjoyed the confidence of Congress and of Washington. Their judgement was confirmed by that of the committee of the Assembly and Council of New York, among whom was Governor Clinton, and the ground was broken in the month of January, by a brigade despatched by Putnam for the purpose.

Congress had directed that an inquiry should be made into the causes of the loss of Forts Clinton and Montgomery; and General Putnam, who had, on the 12th of February, returned to Connecticut on a visit to his family, was of course required to attend, as the commander of the army of the Highlands at the time of the disaster; but the report of the court, constituted for this purpose, attached no blame to any officer. He was, however, superseded in his command; and the circumstances attending this change demand some notice.

In a letter addressed to him by Washington on the 16th of March, we find the following passage: "General McDougall is to take the command of the army of the Highlands. My reason for making this change is owing to the prejudices of the people, which, whether well or ill grounded, must be indulged; and I should think myself wanting in justice to the public and candor towards you, were I to continue you in a command, after I have been almost in direct terms informed, that the people of New York will not render the necessary support and assistance, while you remain at the head of that department."

The complaints to which Washington refers were very general, and had probably their origin chiefly in the ill success of Putnam's efforts to prevent the incursions of the enemy, and the loss and inconvenience, which were thus occasioned. General Schuyler's history, however, is sufficient to show, that such prejudices are not always well founded in proportion to their violence; though in this instance it was necessary for the commander-in-chief to yield to them, without deciding the question of their justness.

Among the charges urged against him, was that of exercising too much lenity in his treatment of the Tories, and of too great facility in allowing intercourse with the enemy. His situation was certainly a difficult one; his disposition inclined him to alleviate as much as possible the evils resulting both from the civil war which was raging in that quarter, and the contest with the foreign enemy; nor is it certain that a different course would have relieved him from all imputation.

Colonel Humphreys has given us an explanation of these circumstances, which is entitled to much consideration, as proceeding from one, who had every opportunity to ascertain the truth. He declares, that General Putnam became the object of this prejudice in consequence of his humanity, in showing all the indulgence he could, consistently with duty. "He had conceived," adds this writer, "an unconquerable aversion to many of the persons who were intrusted with the disposal of Tory property, because he believed them to have been guilty of peculation, and other infamous practices. But, although the enmity between him and the sequestrators was acrimonious as mutual, yet he lived in habits of amity with the most respected characters in public departments, as well as in private life." It is difficult at this time to determine the precise weight which should be attached to the charge on one hand, and the vindication on the other; it is sufficient to say, that the former imputed to him no improper design, nor affected in any way the purity of his character.

After the termination of the inquiry already mention-

ed, General Putnam was ordered to Connecticut, to hasten the march of the new levies from that quarter. He returned to the camp shortly after the battle of Monmouth, and took the command of the right wing of the army; but no important operation occurred before the retirement of the troops into their winter-quarters, the arrangement for which was made early in November. General Putnam, with three brigades, composed of the Connecticut and New Hampshire troops, and two other regiments, was then stationed at Danbury, in Connecticut.

In the course of the winter, a spirit of insubordination arose among a portion of these troops, which, but for the vigor and promptness of their commander, might have been attended by the most serious results. The General Assembly of Connecticut was in session at Hartford; and a plan was matured by the brigades belonging to that colony, of marching thither to demand redress of the grievances under which they labored. One of them was already under arms, when the intelligence of their proceedings was brought to General Putnam. He rode instantly to their cantonment, and addressed them with his usual energy, in an appeal which went directly to a soldier's heart; when he concluded, he ordered them to march to their regimental parades and lodge their arms; and the command was instantly obeyed.

In the course of the winter, General Putnam was one day visiting his outpost at West Greenwich, when Governor Tryon, with a corps of fifteen hundred men, was on his march against it. Putnam had with him only one hundred and fifty men, with two pieces of artillery; with these he took his station on the brow of a steep declivity near the meeting-house. The road turned to the north, just before it reached the edge of the steep; after proceeding in this direction for a considerable distance, it inclined to the south, rendering the descent gradual and tolerably safe. As the British advanced, they were received with a sharp fire from the artillery; but, perceiving the dragoons about to charge, Putnam ordered his men to retire to a swamp, inaccessible to cavalry,

while he himself forced his horse directly down the precipice. His pursuers, who were close upon him, paused with astonishment as they reached the edge, and saw him accomplish his perilous descent; and before they could gain the valley by the road, he was far beyond their reach.

The declivity, from this circumstance, has since generally borne the name of Putnam's Hill. He continued his route to Stamford, where he found some militia, with whom, added to his former band, he pursued Tryon on his retreat; and, notwithstanding the inferiority of his force, succeeded in taking about fifty prisoners.

The military career of General Putnam terminated with the campaign of 1779, during which he commanded the Maryland line, stationed near West Point, but was engaged in no important operations. His time was principally occupied in superintending the erection of the new defences of that commanding post. There he remained until the army retired to their winter-quarters at Morristown, when he returned with his family on a visit to Brooklyn, in Connecticut, the place to which his residence had been transferred. As he was journeying towards Hartford on his way back to Morristown, his progress was arrested by an attack of paralysis, by which the use of his limbs on one side was temporarily lost. For a season, he was reluctant to admit the real character of his disease, and resorted to very active exertion for relief; but the complaint refused to yield to the influences of such a remedy, and he was doomed to pass the remainder of his life in a state of comparative inaction.

In closing the recital of the military services of General Putnam, it would be unjust to his memory to omit a portion of a letter addressed to him by General Washington, in 1783, after the conclusion of the treaty of peace. "I can assure you, that, among the many worthy and meritorious officers, with whom I have had the happiness to be connected in service through the course of this war, and from whose cheerful assistance and advice I have received much support and confidence in the va-

rious and trying vicissitudes of a complicated contest, the name of Putnam is not forgotten; nor will be but with that stroke of time, which shall obliterate from my mind the remembrance of all those toils and fatigues, through which we have struggled for the preservation and establishment of the rights, liberties, and independence of our country."

General Putnam survived the close of the war about seven years; a period of repose, strongly contrasted with the animation and vicissitude which had marked his early and maturer life; presenting little incident for his biographer to record, yet forming an appropriate termination of a busy and adventurous career. His age and bodily infirmities disqualified him for any public occupation, but did not impair his ability to enjoy the tranquil pleasures, that constitute the solace of declining years. He was enabled to take the moderate exercise, which the preservation of his measure of health required; and the vigor of his mind remained unbroken to the last. Fortunately, his early agricultural labors had provided him with a competency, and shielded him from the embarrassment and sorrow, which darkened the old age of many of his brethren of the army of the Revolution; and thus, in the retirement of his family, enjoying the regard of those around him, and the grateful respect of his countrymen, his life gradually wore away. On the 17th of May, 1790, he was suddenly attacked by an inflammatory disease, and foresaw that his end was nigh; the consolations of religion sustained him in his closing hours, and, two days afterwards, he died with resignation and in peace. His remains were borne by his fellow citizens to the grave with the martial honors due to the memory of a brave and patriotic soldier, and a feeling eulogy was delivered by a neighbor and personal friend.

It only remains for us to say a few words respecting the military and personal character of one, whose history we have thus attempted to delineate. His qualities as a soldier are already apparent to the reader. Under all circumstances, however critical, he was perfectly fearless and self-possessed, and full of the most active energy and

resource at the time when they were most urgently required. No man could surpass him in the fiery charge, of which the success depends so much upon the leader; in this respect he reminds the reader of Murat, the gallant marshal of Napoleon; nor would the general feeling deny him the proud title, by which another of those marshals was distinguished, that of the bravest of the brave. At the same time, as has been already intimated, he was somewhat less successful in the more extended operations, which require the combined action of large and separate masses of men. Yet, when it is remembered, that, wholly without military education, and with scarcely any other, and simply by the force of his own energy and talent, he rose through all the gradations of the service to the station of first major-general in the army of the United States, till he stood second in rank to Washington alone, no better evidence could be given or required of his capacity and conduct as a soldier. Nor should it be forgotten, that his humanity was always as conspicuous as his bravery; his treatment of the sick and wounded was such as to attract the warm attachment of his own soldiers, and to extort the gratitude of the enemy. He is certainly entitled to the praise of disinterested, ardent, and successful efforts in the cause of his country; and he will be long remembered among those who served her faithfully and well, at a season when she wanted either the ability or the inclination to reward their toils and sacrifices.

But the military reputation of General Putnam, high as it was, concealed no dark traits of personal character beneath its shadow. In all the domestic relations, the surest tests of habitual virtue, he was most exemplary; and his excellence in this respect deserves the more notice, as the stern discipline and wild adventure, in which so much of his life was spent, were more favorable to the growth of severer qualities. His disposition was frank, generous, and kind; in his intercourse with others, he was open, just, sincere, and unsuspecting; liberal in his hospitality, and of ready benevolence wherever there was occasion for his charity. Those who knew him best

were the most forward to express their admiration of his excellence. The late President Dwight, who was his friend, but very unlikely to sacrifice the claims of truth to those of personal regard, has in his writings more than once expressed the sentiment, which he has embodied in the inscription on General Putnam's monument; that he was "a man, whose generosity was singular, whose honesty was proverbial; who raised himself to universal esteem, and offices of eminent distinction, by personal worth and a useful life." Such is the language of others who have borne witness to his private virtues; and what more needs to be added, than that his moral excellence flowed from a religious fountain, and that the character of a man of worth was adorned and dignified in him by the higher qualities of a Christian?

LIFE
OF
DAVID RITTENHOUSE;
BY
JAMES RENWICK, LL. D.

II.

27

V.

DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction.

THE annals of our country are illustrated by but few names of scientific eminence. It has been well remarked, that the energies of our people have been directed by circumstances to objects demanding not less powers of mind, than those required to master the highest subjects in abstract knowledge. To plan constitutions and enact laws for a mighty nation, placed under new circumstances, and to bring, by novel applications of science, the most distant parts of an extensive continent into close and frequent intercourse, are objects as worthy of a master-spirit, as the investigation of the most subtile mathematical problems, or the research of the most recondite physical questions. Yet, as the paucity of our men of science has been urged upon us as a reproach, it behooves us to set a due value upon those whom our country has produced, and who, while their contemporaries have been engaged in reclaiming the wilderness, in bringing to light the hidden or dormant riches of our soil, in opening artificial, and improving natural channels of trade, and in extending our commerce to the most distant regions of the globe, have patiently devoted themselves to the less lucrative pursuit of philosophic study. Among these the subject of the present memoir holds no mean place. Were we called upon to assign him a rank among the philosophers whom America has produced, we should place him, in point of scientific merit, as second to Franklin alone. If he wanted the originality and happy

talent for discovery, possessed by that highly gifted man, he has the advantage of having applied himself with success to a more elevated department of physical science.

Astronomy, to use the words of Davy, is the most ancient, as it is now the most perfect, of the sciences. Connected with the earliest events even of savage life, the phenomena of the heavenly bodies must have attracted the attention of the progenitors of our species, from the time they were doomed to eat their bread in the sweat of their brow. The waning and increase of the moon, and the connexion of her phases with the varying length of the natural day, have been studied and transmitted from father to son, among even the rudest tribes of hunters; and the wildest Indians of our own country still note them for similar purposes. At no long interval after the deluge of Noah, the Egyptian husbandmen, who first furrowed the soil, wherein to cast the seeds of the cereal *gramina*, remarked the coincidence of the reappearance of Sirius in the eastern horizon, with the return of the vivifying waters of the inundation; and from that time to the present, man has not forgotten the use of the heavenly bodies, as signs and as seasons. From the hands of the hunter and the husbandman, astronomy, still in a rude state, passed into those of a priesthood, which, monopolizing the traditions of its more obvious facts, found in them the surest support of its influence, and turned to the purposes of superstition, what had been preserved for general use. Twenty centuries have however elapsed since this science made its escape from the dark cells of the pagan temple, and took up its abode in the observatory of Hipparchus. From that time to the present, in the hands of the Greek, the Arab, the Tartar, and finally in those of the nations of modern Europe, astronomy has made almost annual progress, until it has become, not only the highest triumph of human genius, but the surest test of civilization. It is only by advancing a knowledge of this science, that the men of future generations can hope to place their names by the side of those of a Ptolemy, a Galileo, a Kepler, a Newton, or a La Place; and it may be almost predicted of a coun-

try in which astronomy is cultivated, that it is polished and enlightened; while we may as surely infer, that, when it is neglected, the arts of civilized life have either never made their appearance, or are upon the decline.

In submitting to this test the claims of our country to be considered as enlightened, we might shrink from the task of comparison, or be on the point of admitting her inferiority to several of the nations of Europe, were we not aware that we even now number among our citizens a name inferior to none in the pursuit of celestial mechanics, and may count in the generation, which has just descended to the tomb, the equal, in skill and tact of observation, of Lalande and Maskelyne in the person of the subject of this memoir.

The science of astronomy, cultivated as it has been for so many centuries, and adorned by genius and talents of the highest order, has accumulated to a vast amount. It has therefore demanded a division of labor, in order to admit of its being pursued in any one direction with complete success. When astronomy first became a science, a few verses might comprise all the treasured learning of former observers, and could be easily committed to memory; further progress could be insured by noting phenomena, visible to the naked eye, or measuring the length of the shadow of a gnomon; calculation was hardly known as an aid, and instruments had not been invented. At the present day, the whole life may be devoted to the study of physical astronomy alone, in which no other instrument is to be employed than the calculus, and no theory required but the simple laws to which Newton reduced the causes of all the celestial motions. Another may find sufficient occupation in calculating in numbers the formulæ obtained by the physical astronomer, and arranging his results in tables, by which future phenomena may be predicted. A third may found upon these tables the ephemerides by which the practical astronomer is to be guided in his observations. The practical astronomer, on the other hand, need devote himself only to watch for the phenomena of the heavenly bodies, as they are successively presented to him in their varying

motions, and thus furnish to the physical astronomer the practical test of his theories, and to calculators the numerical values of the quantities involved in the formulæ. Observation, however, would be beyond measure laborious, were not its proper times predicted in the calculated tables, and is now of no account, unless performed by the most perfect instruments, and aided by the most accurate arithmetic.

The construction of the instruments, which the practical astronomer demands, forms an elevated branch of the mechanic arts, and requires no little proficiency in the physical sciences. The artists, who have improved the fabrication of the timekeeper, and increased the accuracy of circular graduation, have been proudly ranked as colleagues by the most learned societies; and their names will be intimately associated with the discoveries, for which their handiwork has furnished the indispensable materials.

In considering the character of Rittenhouse, we shall find him uniting in himself more of these varied merits than any person who has lived since a division in the labors of astronomy became necessary. If he made no attempt to extend the domain of celestial mechanics, he nevertheless mastered, under most unfavorable circumstances, all that Newton had taught; he calculated with success the difficult problem of the path of various comets; exhibited unsurpassed precision and accuracy in many important observations; and finally, constructed the greater part of his instruments with his own hands. Other claims we might present for him, not only to the admiration, but to the gratitude of his countrymen. We shall not, however, anticipate what may be best gathered from the records of his useful and laborious life.

[It is proper to state, that since this life was written, the distinguished individual, alluded to on the preceding page, as "inferior to none in the pursuit of celestial mechanics," has also "descended to the tomb;" we mean, Nathaniel Bowditch, L.L. D. who died in Boston, on the 16th of March, 1838, in the 65th year of his age. An interesting account of this distinguished philosopher has been prepared for us, and will be published in a subsequent volume of the 'SCHOOL LIBRARY.'—PUBLISHERS.]

CHAPTER II.

His Birth and Parentage.

THE family, whence Rittenhouse descended, was originally from that part of the duchy of Guelders, which had become a province of the United Netherlands. This republic of confederated States had, as is well known, attempted, at one time, to occupy one of the fairest portions of this continent, and had established settlements, scattered at distances, over a wide extent of country. The advantageous position of New York had attracted the attention of its traders and soldiers, and had become the site of a strong fortress, around which a little city had collected, under the name of Amsterdam. Proceeding hence, posts had been established, on the one hand, on the Connecticut River, while, on the other, the western shore of the Delaware was occupied, after a contest with the Swedes. Both banks of the Hudson were in full possession of this colony, not only by military stations, but by flourishing agricultural settlements. The Dutch province of the New Netherlands, therefore, included, at one time, not only the ancient part of the present State of New York, but the whole of New Jersey and Delaware, the eastern part of Pennsylvania, and the western part of Connecticut. This wide extent they were not permitted to occupy without remonstrance on the part of the settlers of English blood. Indeed, the whole of it fell within the chartered limits of companies founded by the government of England. That government, however, did not interfere directly with the progress of the Dutch, until the reign of the second Charles; nor were its colonies in a condition to assert their claims by an appeal to arms. It was not, therefore, until 1662 that an expedition was fitted out from England, for the conquest of the New Netherlands. This was successful, and the

province was ceded by the Dutch, at the peace of Breda. That peace was but of short duration; and the government of Holland, unwilling to part wholly with so valuable a colony, took advantage of the ensuing war to repossess themselves of it. It did not, however, long remain in their hands; for the final cession of the New Netherlands to England was insisted upon at the peace of Westminster, in 1674, before two years from its recovery had elapsed.

We have been thus particular, because it appears that the ancestor of Rittenhouse emigrated to the New Netherlands during the last-mentioned period, while the colony was reoccupied by the Dutch arms. This ancestor was the great-grandfather of the subject of this memoir, and he was accompanied, or speedily followed, by his two sons. One of these, by name Nicholas, married in New York. The father, accompanied by this son, emigrated from New York to Germantown, in 1690. Here they established the first manufactory of paper ever erected in America. It would appear, that this was an art, in which the elder Rittenhouse, or Rittinghousen, as the name seems to have been originally spelled, had been engaged in his native country; and it is said that his relatives continued to pursue this business at Arnheim, in Guelderland, after his departure for America. The enterprise, however, marks a union of capital, intelligence, and enterprise, at that time rare in the colonies.

Nicholas pursued the manufacture of paper after the death of his father, and brought up to it his youngest son Matthias, who succeeded to the possession of the mill, and prosecuted the business after the decease of his parent.

Here we find an illustration of the mode of inheritance originally practised among the settlers who derived their origin from Holland, and which is not wholly obliterated at the present day. The father of a family provided, to the best of his ability, for his elder sons, as they successively attained to man's estate. His youngest son remained with him, even if married, until his death, when he succeeded to the occupation of the original homestead.

This custom appears better founded in natural reason than the law of primogeniture, and even more just than the existing laws which regulate the descent of property. By it, a prop is secured for the declining years of parents, in the care of an affectionate son, who finds not only his duty, but his own personal interest, in the care which he takes of the property of his father.

It is a remarkable fact, which we must not pass over, that the introduction of the manufacture of paper into America by the Rittenhouses, was about as early as the time at which it took root in Great Britain.

Matthias Rittenhouse, while still resident at Germantown, and occupied in the manufacture of paper, took to wife Elizabeth Williams, the daughter of a native of Wales. This marriage took place in 1727. Shortly afterwards, he appears to have discovered, that agriculture offered greater chances of providing for a growing family, than the manufacture in which he was engaged; for we find him, in 1730, retiring from the latter business. With the funds derived from the sale of his property at Germantown, he proceeded, in that year, to the township of Norriton, where he commenced a settlement upon a small farm, of which his means were sufficient to enable him to become the owner. His residence, however, does not appear to have been permanently fixed at Norriton, until after 1732; for his three elder children were born at Germantown. Among these was David, the subject of this memoir, who, although not the first born, was the eldest child who survived the age of infancy.

One of the former biographers of Rittenhouse has endeavored to account for his abilities, by supposing that he derived them by descent from the mother's side. In this he seems to have adopted the popular opinion, which denies to persons of pure Dutch descent any claim to talents of the higher order. This opinion is, however, no more than a prejudice, which any inquiry into the annals of our country might have dissipated. It may indeed be admitted, that the settlers of the New Netherlands made a less careful and less extensive provision for the education of their children, than was done by the

descendants of the Pilgrims; and to this want of foresight we may fairly ascribe any difference in the intelligence of the several masses of people. But, in comparing those classes whose wealth gave them the power of commanding the higher kind of education, Holland has no reason to blush for her descendants; and the number of intelligent and learned individuals of Dutch extraction is only small, because the population whence they are derived is less numerous, than that with which it is thus invidiously compared. The United Netherlands were distinguished, at the time when the ancestors of Rittenhouse emigrated, for high attainments in science and the useful arts. The very business in which they had been engaged in the place of their nativity, and which they so speedily resumed in America, may almost serve as a proof, that they were devoid neither of education nor ability. Still, talent is not hereditary in families; and it often happens that we are wholly at a loss to account, by any circumstances of parentage, for the peculiar genius of individuals. So far from there being a transmission of abilities by natural descent, nothing is rarer than to find successive generations of the same family equally distinguished; and, on the other hand, it often happens that a single individual may shed lustre upon a name, which may be almost disgraced by his nearest relations.

The mother of Rittenhouse is described as a woman of uncommonly vigorous and comprehensive mind, but as almost wholly deficient in education. If, therefore, we are to seek in his genealogy for the cause of his distinction, it is rather to be found in the fact of his deriving his descent from two races of distant origin. The effect of such a mixture of races is well illustrated in the character of the people of Great Britain; and the same cause seems to be at work in producing that peculiar activity of mind which marks our own countrymen, into whose veins blood derived from almost every nation of any intellectual eminence in the old world has been successively transfused. From such parents, and of such lineage, DAVID RITTENHOUSE derived his birth, which took place at Germantown, Pennsylvania, on the 8th of April, 1732.

CHAPTER III.

His Education.—Early Indications of Mechanical Genius.—Remarkable Progress in Mathematical Learning.

No records or traditions remain of the manner in which Rittenhouse obtained the elements of learning. His education, however, could not have been neglected; and what public instruction, in the imperfect form it must have borne in a remote district of a newly settled country, denied, seems to have been supplied by the tuition of a maternal uncle. This near relation, although exercising the humble trade of a joiner, appears to have been gifted with a taste and capacity for scientific pursuits. Circumstances made him an inmate in the family of the elder Rittenhouse, and in this abode he died. His books and papers passed thereupon into the custody of his nephew David, along with his tools of trade. Among his books were found elementary treatises on mathematics and astronomy; and in addition he left numerous manuscripts, in which were contained models of calculation and investigation.

The death of his uncle took place when Rittenhouse had attained his twelfth year. Whether in continuation of former studies, or in consequence of the interest excited by the treasures which came by this event into his possession, he seems from that time to have devoted his whole mind, and every opportunity of leisure, to the pursuit of the studies in which he afterwards became distinguished. The son of a farmer, in comfortable, but by no means affluent circumstances, it became imperative, that he should share in the labors of agriculture; and this was the more necessary, as his father entertained a desire that he should pursue the occupation of a farmer. Even when engaged in agricultural labors, however, the bent of his

genius was not to be restrained; and it was recollected by his brother that in his fourteenth year he was in the habit of covering the fences of the farm, and the implements of husbandry, with numerical figures and diagrams, unintelligible to his rustic associates.

Mere abstract investigations did not, however, engross his whole attention. The tool-chest of his uncle supplied him with the instruments for practice in the mechanic arts; and he appears to have applied his severer studies to practical purposes, at every possible opportunity. Thus it is recorded of him, that, as early as in his eighth year, he had made a model of a water-mill, and, at no long period after the death of his uncle, he undertook and succeeded in the construction of a clock. The material of both of these early evidences of his ingenuity and knowledge was wood. But he, almost immediately after the last-mentioned instance of successful ingenuity, undertook the bolder task of framing a timekeeper in metal; and this he also successfully accomplished.

Among the books he inherited from his uncle was an English translation of the "Principia" of Newton. Such was the progress which he made in mathematical knowledge, although now destitute of any aid, that he was enabled to accomplish the perusal of this work, for the proper understanding of which so much acquaintance with geometry and algebra is necessary, before he had attained his nineteenth year. Newton, as is well known, from deference to the practice of the ancient philosophers, adopts in this work the synthetic method of demonstration, and gives no clue to the analytic process by which the truth of his propositions was first discovered by him. Unlike the English followers of this distinguished philosopher, who contented themselves, for a time, with following implicitly in the path of geometric demonstration, which he had thus pointed out, Rittenhouse applied himself to search for an instrument, which might be applied to the purpose of similar discoveries, and in his researches attained the principles of the method of fluxions. So ignorant was he of the progress which this calculus had made, and of the discussions in relation to its invention

and improvement, that he for a time considered it as a new discovery of his own. In this impression, however, he could not have long continued; as he made, in his nineteenth year, an acquaintance, who was well qualified to set him right in this important point.

In the year 1751, the Reverend Thomas Barton became an inhabitant of Norriton. This gentleman had just completed his education at Trinity College, Dublin, and been admitted as a clergyman of the Episcopal Church. Passing to America in pursuit of preferment, which want of powerful connexions denied him in Europe, he became for a time the teacher of a school at Norriton. Although Mr. Barton was principally distinguished as a classical scholar, he was also well grounded in all the elementary mathematics then considered necessary in the undergraduate course of the institution where he received his education. Exiled as he must have felt himself from literary society, the discovery of a neighbor of such intelligence as Rittenhouse was a matter of no little pleasure; nor could the latter have felt less joy in finding at last an associate with whom he could communicate on his favorite studies. The difference in their ages was but two years; and, when we take into view the more rapid developement, both of body and mind, which is usual in our climate, this difference was probably insensible. A strong intimacy speedily took place, which ripened into friendship; and this friendship was further cemented by an attachment, which Barton formed for the sister of Rittenhouse, who subsequently became his wife. This intimacy with Barton was attended with valuable consequences. Desirous to peruse his admired Newton in the original dress, Rittenhouse now applied himself to the study of the Latin language, which he speedily mastered. He also appears, under the instruction of Barton, to have acquired the elements of Greek, although he never attempted to become a proficient in the literature of that tongue. Barton also had it in his power to communicate to Rittenhouse scientific works of more modern date, than those to which his previous studies had, from circumstances, been confined, and

treating of a greater variety of subjects. Setting forth from his native country with the intention of devoting himself to the profession of a teacher, the former had provided himself with a well-selected library, not only in classical literature, but also in the pure and mixed sciences. These were freely imparted to his youthful and ardent associate.

Before two years had elapsed, the success of Barton as a teacher, attracted the attention of the government of the College of Philadelphia. He was in consequence called to fill a professor's chair in that institution. The collections of the college were therefore placed at his disposal, and he did not hesitate to use his privilege for the advantage of him who had now become his brother-in-law. Barton had also projected a circulating library before he quitted Norriton. This project was accomplished, and Rittenhouse took an active part in its management. By this a fund was obtained for the purchase of useful works, which neither could have afforded to procure from his own resources.

Barton had not long filled his chair in the university, when it became necessary for him to visit Europe. He on this occasion was commissioned by Rittenhouse to purchase an additional supply of books. This commission he faithfully fulfilled.

Such was the aid which Rittenhouse derived from his brother-in-law, but this, however valuable in communicating a knowledge of the existing state of science, and in opening a channel through another language, by which to reach the thoughts and learning of the master spirits, both of antiquity and modern times, (for Latin had not ceased to be the conventional language of science,) had no effect in determining the inclinations of Rittenhouse for mathematical and physical studies. The acquaintance with Barton was therefore both useful and profitable, but exercised a far less important influence on the future life of Rittenhouse, than has been frequently ascribed to it.

The more, indeed, we contemplate the early life of Rittenhouse, the more our admiration is excited.

With such elementary knowledge only as could be obtained at the school of a remote settlement; under the parental discipline of a father, who rather discouraged than aided his studies, and of an illiterate, although strong-minded mother; possessed of no books but those of an humble mechanic; he persevered, until he had, step by step, mastered all the truths of mathematical science, and had arrived at the principles of that calculus, for the honor of whose invention a Newton and a Leibnitz had contended. At the same time, with no tools but those of a country joiner, and aided by no instruction except from books, he had attained such skill in practical mechanics as to execute the delicate mechanism of a time-keeper.

CHAPTER IV.

His Agricultural Occupations.—Choice of a Profession.—Entrance into Business.—Laborious Pursuit of his Trade and Scientific Studies.—Consequent Injury to his Health.—Becomes known as an Artist and an Astronomer.—His Marriage.

THE father of Rittenhouse had always intended that his eldest surviving son should pursue the same plan of life which, on his retreat from his manufactory, he had chosen for himself. He had, on leaving Germantown, become, as we have already stated, a farmer, and for this occupation he destined our philosopher. The term farmer, it may be mentioned incidentally, bears a far different signification among us, from that which its derivation would seem to warrant, or in which it is understood in Great Britain. By this word we understand, not the tenant, either at pleasure, or on some more secure tenure, of a more wealthy landlord, but most frequently the independent cultivator of his own fields. The condition of a

tenant is in truth extremely rare in all parts of the United States.

In the avocations necessary in this mode of life, Rittenhouse had been laboriously employed, from the moment his strength was sufficient to perform them; and the studies and mechanical operations of which we have spoken, were no more than the pastimes of those intervals of leisure, which so frequently occur in agricultural life in the United States. When the mind of Rittenhouse became so far matured, as to fit him for reflecting upon the plan of his future life, his reason led him to disapprove of that pointed out by his father. He had discovered in himself powers of higher character, than are necessary for the occupation of a farmer; and, encouraged by his success in the construction of a complete timekeeper, he resolved, could his father be prevailed upon to give his consent, to choose for his profession that of a clock-maker. This branch of the mechanic arts was, at that time, little practised in the colonies, and it does not appear that there were any means within his reach for obtaining instruction in it. His reasons finally satisfied his father of the propriety of this contemplated course.

The choice of Rittenhouse was directed by no little wisdom and modesty. Had his mind been tinctured with vanity, it is probable that he would rather have sought to make those studies available, in which he had, by this time, made no mean proficiency, than have undertaken an apprenticeship, for we might so style the practice of an art, in which his highest efforts, when compared even with the less perfect instruments of that period, were no more than the playthings of an ingenious, and perhaps precocious boy. Years of toil and patient labor must have appeared in perspective, before he could obtain a competent degree of skill; and without it the reputation, by which alone fortune, or even competence, could be secured, was inaccessible. Such thoughts, however, did not deter Rittenhouse; and, the consent of his father being finally obtained, along with funds to purchase a part of the necessary tools and instruments, he opened a shop

in the year 1751. This was a small building erected for him on his father's farm; and he speedily stocked it with instruments, the work of his own hands, more perfect than any which could at that time be bought in Philadelphia.

The art of clock-making was at that time far from having reached the degree of perfection it has attained of late years, partly from the great extent to which the division of labor has since been carried in it, and partly from the valuable improvements which it has derived from the discoveries of physical science. To improve the art by introducing a division in the labor, neither entered into the views, nor was within the means of Rittenhouse. Such division can only be carried into effect by the resources of wealth and capital, of which he had little. But the search for improvement, by the application of physical science, had already been entered into; and Rittenhouse might fairly hope, that the knowledge he had previously acquired might be advantageously applied to the profession he had chosen. The compensation pendulum of Graham, which has of late asserted its equality, if not its superiority, over all others intended to subserve the same purpose, had indeed been invented more than twenty years before. But his contemporaries did not appreciate the merits of the discovery, and it was forgotten or neglected. Harrison and Leroy had not made public their inventions, and the field of investigation appeared to be open. The art of clock-making, therefore, not only presented a trade, interesting in itself, and capable of affording a decent livelihood, but also demanded, in order that it should be pursued with success, that he should continue the study of those physical and experimental sciences, by the progress of which the instrument could alone be perfected. His astronomical studies had taught him the value of the clock in the practical part of that science, a value so great as to render it the indispensable companion of an observer; and he was aware that he could not deliver his pieces of nicest workmanship to the purchaser, until their rates had been ascertained by reference to the motions of the heavenly bodies. He there-

fore saw in his intended trade, not only an opportunity, but a necessity, for continuing the study of the sciences in which he delighted.

For the space of seven years Rittenhouse devoted himself most assiduously to his trade, and the studies he saw to be connected with it. The whole of the day was steadily employed in the former; time for the latter was stolen from his hours of repose. Up to this time his constitution, fortified by agricultural labor, and exercise in the open air, had been robust and vigorous. But such intense and unremitting exertion was not without evil effect upon his health; and this was probably aggravated by the contrast, which a wholly sedentary life presented to his former active pursuits. He finally was affected by a complaint, the prominent symptom of which was a continual and disagreeable sensation of heat in his stomach. He was, in consequence, compelled to abandon for a time the pursuits in which he had so earnestly engaged. A short period of relaxation sufficed to restore him, if not to his pristine health, at least to such a degree of it, as enabled him to resume his business. But the complaint was not wholly overcome; it continued to afflict him from time to time throughout the rest of his life, and was finally the cause of his abandoning the exercise of his art.

Pursuing his trade with such unwearied assiduity, it is not surprising that he speedily acquired reputation for the accuracy and perfection of his workmanship. This reputation was spread abroad by the numerous highly-finished pieces of mechanism which issued from his workshop, bearing the maker's name inscribed upon their dials. His neighbors, too, were not slow to note the attention he paid to observations of the heavenly bodies, which he extended far beyond those absolutely essential for the rating of his timekeepers, and spread his fame throughout their limited circle as an astronomer. It was now that the good offices of his friend Barton were again exerted. Knowing well the ability of his brother-in-law, he watched with earnestness his almost daily progress in manual dexterity and scientific knowledge. In the more extended circle in which he moved, he found those who could fully

appreciate all the skill and knowledge of Rittenhouse. With these he brought him in contact, to the mutual pleasure of both parties. From such associations Rittenhouse derived no little benefit, in obtaining a channel through which his merits could be made more extensively known. Among those who may be mentioned as the early friends of Rittenhouse, were Dr. Smith, the provost of the College of Philadelphia, and John Lukens, surveyor-general of the province. Their official positions rendered them the organs of the government, when a demand for astronomic knowledge arose for public purposes; and they conferred no trifling public benefit, when they pointed out the capacity of Rittenhouse.

While thus engaged in the pursuit of his occupation, Rittenhouse long remained an inmate of his father's family. Here his labors were gradually acquiring for him provision competent to his moderate desires.

After the lapse of thirteen years from the time of his entering into business, his father made him proprietor of the paternal mansion, retiring himself to Worcester, where he had purchased another farm. Thus having attained to independence, he sought a wife, and, in the year 1764, married Eleanor Colston, the daughter of a respectable farmer of the neighborhood. This marriage appears to have been a happy one; and the loss of his consort, after several years, produced so great a depression in the spirits of the surviving husband, as to call forth the remonstrances of his friends.

CHAPTER V.

Boundary Line of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.—Mason and Dixon's Line.—Boundary of Pennsylvania and New York.

RITTENHOUSE had hardly begun to attract the attention of the intelligent society of Philadelphia, when an

occasion presented itself for applying his peculiar talent and knowledge to use in the public service. The several States of which the American Union was first composed, held their respective territories by grants from the British crown. In the absence of a topographical knowledge of the countries granted, it had been customary to define the limits of the several charters by lines traced upon a map, and defined either by geographical terms, or even by more arbitrary methods. In the subdivision, which in some cases took place, of the original grants, similar lines were chosen to define the manner of partition. These lines were in most cases parallels of latitude, or portions of a meridian, traced in some given degree of longitude. However easy it may be to delineate such lines upon a map, to trace them upon the ground is a business of no little labor, and requires no small degree both of astronomic and geometric skill.

The tenure, by which Penn and his descendants held their possessions, was defined by lines of this character. He had in the first instance purchased a territory included within a circle, drawn around a point in the town of Newcastle, as a centre, with a radius of twelve miles. This had been subsequently extended to the south by drawing a meridian line tangent to this circle. By a farther grant he had acquired all the territory extending westward from the Delaware between certain parallels of latitude, for the distance of five degrees of longitude. All these contemplated boundaries were as yet merely matters of parchment record, or geographical description; but the place where the lines existed was in some cases wholly unknown, in others, but imperfectly guessed at. The part of this boundary, which most early attracted the attention of the interested parties, was that, which separated the territory held by Penn as proprietor, from that belonging to Lord Baltimore, and particularly the limits of the present States of Delaware and Maryland. As early as 1735, this boundary had become the subject of a suit in the British court of chancery, and after fifteen years of delay a decree had been awarded. By this decree the parties were directed to enter into a for-

mal written agreement to have the lines traced upon the ground. This agreement, however, was not executed until 1760, and no joint action was had under it until 1769. But in the last-mentioned year Messrs. Mason and Dixon were sent out from England, as commissioners, for the purpose of carrying the agreement into effect.

In the proceedings before the court of chancery, the Penn family had been the complainants. Their interests were far more deeply involved in the decision, than those of the opposite party; for the wise institutions of their ancestor, and the repugnance of the settlers under them to slave labor, had rendered each acre within their proprietary jurisdiction of much greater value than in the lands held by Lord Baltimore. They were therefore unwilling to await the slow course of chancery proceedings, but determined to examine the question for themselves; knowing, that, when a boundary is defined in scientific terms, it was only necessary to cause it to be traced by men of competent attainments, and no important difference could arise in the subsequent determination by a joint action.

The governor of the province of Pennsylvania was therefore directed to seek out a competent person, to whom this important task might be intrusted. The most difficult part of the boundary was no doubt that defined by a circle, having a radius of twelve miles, around the town of Newcastle as a centre, and the problem was entirely new in practical geometry. To this the attention of Rittenhouse was first directed by the proprietary government, not only as the part of the division line which was involved in the greatest uncertainty, but because it passed through lands at that time more accessible and therefore more valuable than any others in dispute. The appointment to this important task bore date in 1763, and he was engaged in it for some months in the following year. It was performed so much to the satisfaction of his employers, that he was proffered, and received, more than the stipulated compensation. It does not appear, that on the subsequent arrival of the commissioners appointed by the British court of chancery, it became necessary to

change the locality of any part of this line, although they were furnished with the best instruments which Europe could then produce, and one of them was already highly celebrated as an accomplished observer, while the American topographer had no instruments that were not the work of his own hands, and was as yet unknown to fame.

The British astronomers, Messrs. Mason and Dixon, seem therefore to have contented themselves with running the meridian tangent southward, and the parallel of latitude westward, until it intersected the meridian traced northward from the source of the north branch of the Potomac. They thus defined the boundaries of the present States of Maryland and Delaware on the one hand, and of Pennsylvania and Delaware on the other. This operation has become famous on more than one account. The tracing of the meridian line between two given latitudes, both of which required accurate astronomic determination, over a country nearly level, afforded an opportunity for actually measuring the itinerary length of the arc in question. This measure is still quoted as one of those whence the magnitude and true figure of the earth are to be deduced, and is the only case where the length of a degree of a meridian has been actually measured; for, in all other instances, the determination has been made, by measuring a base of a few miles, and calculating the whole length by means of a series of triangles. The parallel is well known in American politics, as it forms the separation between the States to which the names of Middle and Southern are applied, and is the boundary between the region in which domestic slavery is still recognised by law, and that in which it has been abolished.

The previous observations of Rittenhouse seem to have greatly facilitated these operations of Mason and Dixon; but, as the official report is made by them, and could have authority only when so made, the connexion of our own countryman with this important question is but little known, and rarely mentioned even among ourselves.

That geographical and geometric lines should have formed the divisions of the original provinces, and thus

of the States, has exercised an influence upon the destinies of our country, which is not the less evident, because it has rarely been noticed. In most of the disputes concerning land titles derived from different authorities, or concerning territorial jurisdiction, it has not been necessary to have recourse to civil violence or hostile arms. The *ultima ratio* has been not the cannon or the bayonet, but the plumb-line, the clock, and the telescope. Even courts of civil authority, where such have had jurisdiction, have been appealed to, only to cause one or other party to perform his duty, or to commission the astronomical surveyors by whom the determination was made. The habit has thus been created of referring to reason and science for the composition of all disputes; and this is so firmly established among the people, that even the folly of their rulers, as was manifested in a recent instance, cannot bring them to refer the matter to the decision of arms. That this habit has become a part of the character of our people, is in a great measure due to the confidence created by the fidelity and accuracy with which the earliest operations of the sort were performed. From the delineation of Mason and Dixon's line to the present time, both State governments, although this portion of their sovereignty has been reserved, and individuals, who have occasionally suffered hardship, have bowed in obedience to the decision of the astronomer. Rittenhouse was the first American, who was employed in the delineation of such lines; he was also most extensively engaged in tracing them, and, with those formed under his instruction, actually defined nearly all the important division lines within the chartered limits of the thirteen original States. Most of these delicate and valuable operations were however performed at a later period of his life, and after the close of the Revolutionary War. The account of them will therefore fall into a subsequent chapter of this memoir. One alone is connected by date with that of which we have just spoken.

This was the determination of the division line between New York and New Jersey, and thus of the point whence the parallel, which divides the former State from Penn-

sylvania, was to be traced westward. The northern limit of New Jersey upon Hudson's River is the forty-first degree of latitude. The point where this parallel intersects the shore was fixed by Rittenhouse in the year 1769, at the request of a board of commissioners deriving their authority from the legislatures of the provinces of New York and New Jersey. The northern limit of both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, upon the Delaware, is the forty-second degree of latitude; and this parallel, continued westward, divides the former from New York. To determine the place where this parallel intersects the Delaware, Rittenhouse received the appointment of commissioner from his native province, and was met by a gentleman named on the part of the province of New York. This appointment also included the duty of running the parallel westward, but nothing farther was done at the time (1774) than to determine the point of departure upon the Delaware.

CHAPTER VI.

Experiments on Expansion.—Application of them to the Pendulum.—Metallic Thermometer.—Experiments on the Compressibility of Water.—Adaptation of Planetary Machines to Clocks.—Project of an Orrery.

FOR the sake of connecting with each other the geodetic operations of Rittenhouse performed previous to the Revolutionary War, we have departed from the order of time. We shall now return, for the purpose of mentioning various other scientific occupations in which he was engaged, between the date at which he was first employed upon the boundary of Maryland, and that at which he became a commissioner to define the line between the States of New York and Pennsylvania.

To a person engaged in the manufacture of clocks,

and occupied in determining their rates by astronomic observations, the influence of variations of temperature upon the oscillations of pendulums becomes at once apparent. That this is owing to the expansion and contraction of the materials of which the pendulums are composed under alternations of heat and cold, was well understood. Partial remedies, too, had been applied; but they had not yet been rendered as available as they might be, for want of a sufficient number of well-conducted experiments. If such had been made, they had not been recorded or published. At the present time, we can refer to no observations of earlier date than those of Rittenhouse, which are worthy of confidence, except a few of Muschenbroeck and of Smeaton. The latter were only made public in 1754, when we have reason to believe that Rittenhouse had already made some progress in his researches. That he entered into this investigation experimentally and pursued it with no small success, we have abundant evidence. The first volume of the "Transactions of the American Philosophical Society," published in 1770, contains a paper of his on expansion by heat; another paper on the same subject is noted by Rush as existing in their archives, and is probably that on the improvement of timekeepers, in the fourth volume. The accuracy of his experiments is demonstrated by the various astronomic clocks, which were constructed by his own hands, or under his direction, in which original forms of compensation pendulums were employed. In this respect, Rittenhouse was somewhat in advance of the applications of science in Europe. The mercurial pendulum, which is now admitted to be the best compensation for a fixed observatory, had indeed been invented by Graham in 1726; but this important discovery had been neglected and almost forgotten. The account of the gridiron pendulum, which was the first that came into familiar use in Europe, was not published by Harrison until 1775. Rittenhouse himself, however, in a letter dated in 1768, refers to Harrison's timekeepers as having been executed in 1765. If, then, he was aware of the discoveries of Graham and Harrison at the time he commenced his own

researches, he did not content himself with a servile imitation, but entered into experiments on which to found his own practice, and struck out a method of compensation different from either.

Another valuable application of a correct knowledge of the relative expansions of solid bodies also occurred to Rittenhouse, and he carried this application into successful practice. In this he forestalled, in the career of discovery, Breguet, who, within the present century, has received no small praise for the reinvention of a forgotten instrument of Rittenhouse's. We refer to the metallic thermometer. It is in evidence, that, in the year 1769, the latter constructed an instrument, in which, by the expansion of metals, a hand was made to traverse on a semicircular dial-plate, on which were marked the degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, and that it corresponded in its indications with the mercurial instrument. Here then we have his experimental knowledge brought to a severe practical test, and applied to an important purpose.

The Florentine Academy had, by an experiment, all the circumstances of which could not be reached, inferred the incompressibility of water. The accuracy of this inference remained for a long time unquestioned. It may be doubted, whether the whole scientific world rejected the Florentine experiment until very recently, when the experiments of Oersted and Perkins have demonstrated the compressibility of water beyond all cavil. The question was at least still open in the days of Rittenhouse, and he proceeded, in 1767, to examine it for his own satisfaction. In doubting the results of the Florentine philosophers, he was not however original; the subject had already been examined by Canton in England, and by Kinnersley, at that time a professor in the College of Philadelphia. But, as the question was not yet admitted to be settled, merit is still to be attributed to one who brought the aid of his powers of research to the investigation of an important question in physical science; an investigation which he pursued by means of his own contrivance, and illustrated by experiments of great ingenuity.

The merits of Rittenhouse, not as a mechanic only, but as a successful improver of physical science, now became apparent to his countrymen. His rising reputation is manifested by the compliment paid him in 1767 by the College of Philadelphia, by which the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him at the public commencement. At a time when the distinction in points of useful knowledge, between those who had received the advantage of a public education and those who had not, was still marked, this act implied a higher degree of acknowledged merit, than would be inferred from a similar diploma at the present day. It was therefore not only a deserved compliment, but a passport to the realms of science.

In the pursuit of his mechanical vocation, Rittenhouse had complied, as was necessary, with the prevailing taste. His clocks were not only accurate as timekeepers, and furnished with the apparatus for striking the hours, but they frequently contained chimes, and other arrangements for performing pieces of music. Among other embellishments, he had adapted to one of his timekeepers a small planetary machine, in which the mean motions of the bodies of the solar system were made to keep their proper rate with the time marked by the instrument. The calculations, into which it became necessary for him to enter as a preparation for this toy, appeared as capable of application on a larger scale. He, in consequence, in 1767, projected the instrument, which, perhaps improperly, is known under the name of his Orrery.

Machines, by which the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies could be represented, are of remote origin. Among the ancients they had even been brought to such a degree of perfection, as to be capable of use in the prediction of eclipses, and of other phenomena, with an accuracy as great as that of any other known method. The great improvements made in modern astronomy had rendered them useless for any such purpose; and, confined to the representation of appearances alone, the mechanic spheres of the ancients were rejected as giving

false notions of the structure of the universe. Still, planetary machines were not the less in request, and it was attempted to give, by means of them, an exhibition of the true relative motions and distances of the bodies of the solar system. The most celebrated machine of this character was constructed by Rowley for the head of the family of Boyle, a name of no little lustre in the annals of science. This nobleman bearing the title of Earl of Orrery, the instrument was introduced to the public under this name, which still continues to be applied to all those intended for similar purposes. By this name also did Rittenhouse propose to designate his projected piece of mechanism. In his views, however, he was actuated by a much higher ambition than has ever stimulated any other person, who has attempted to exhibit the mechanism of the universe by the aid of the workmanship of human hands.

Abandoning all attempts to exhibit the imaginary celestial sphere, a mode of representing appearances, which is no more than a projection in orthographic perspective upon a surface supposed to be infinitely distant, he retained no other portion of it but the zodiac. He wisely saw the immense difference, which must result between the true geocentric places of the bodies themselves, and those which would be represented by any instrument enclosed within a skeleton sphere. His mimic planets were not made to revolve in circular orbits with uniform motion, but were caused to describe ellipses in conformity to the laws by which Kepler had completed the theory of Copernicus. So far from being content with a mere approximation to the relative motions, he conceived the design of regulating them to each other with such accuracy, that his instrument might be used in the place of tables for predicting the places and phenomena for any given epoch. Bold and novel as were these designs, Rittenhouse proposed to carry them into effect, if not in such a manner as to supersede the use of astronomic tables, yet so as to give to calculators a valuable check upon their numerical computations. The motions of his mimic planets were to be so registered upon proper dials,

as to give not the mean heliocentric places, but the true anomalies, defining the positions in elliptic orbits, both as seen from the sun and from the earth for twenty-five centuries before, and as many after, the date of its construction. If, then, we should ascribe, as some have done, to the orrery of Rittenhouse no higher place among physical instruments than that of an ingenious philosophic toy, we must admit that he exhausted in its construction all the existing knowledge of astronomy, and applied this extensive scientific information, with the most consummate practical skill. \

From the time at which the orrery was projected, until it was actually completed, Rittenhouse was exposed to many interruptions. These, however, are so little to be regretted, that we consider them as having furnished him with the means of establishing his future fame upon a basis far more sure than any such application, even of the highest science, and the most perfect mechanical dexterity.

CHAPTER VII.

Preparations for observing the Transit of Venus.

UP to the year 1768, we have no records of the astronomical observations of Rittenhouse. They had been limited to such as were necessary for regulating his time-keepers, or were called for in tracing the boundary lines, for the determination of which his practical and theoretic skill had been resorted to. In the practice of such observations, and in the execution of the public trusts confided to him, he had gradually acquired much dexterity in the management of instruments, and facility in calculation. The year 1769 presented an opportunity, in which his practised powers of observation and computation might be applied to an important purpose. This year is rendered memorable in the annals of astronomy, by the recur-

rence of that rare phenomenon, the transit of the planet Venus over the sun's disk.

From the time that the truth of the Copernican system had been universally admitted, it was known that this planet must, at every succeeding interval of about five hundred and eighty-four days, be in inferior conjunction with the sun. Whether the planet shall be exactly interposed at this time between the body of the sun and the earth, in such manner that it may be seen, by the aid of proper instruments, passing over the disk of the former, will depend upon the inclination of the orbit of the planet. As this inclination is considerable, the phenomenon of such a passage was inferred to be at best a rare one. Before the telescope was adapted as a sight to graduated instruments, and great public observatories were established at national expense, the tables which gave the inclination of Venus's orbit were far from agreeing. An Englishman of the name of Horrox, however, placing reliance upon the Rudolphine tables of Kepler, ventured to predict a transit of this planet for the year 1639. The result verified his prediction, and he, with a friend of the name of Crabtree, was fortunate enough to see this rare and curious phenomenon, of which they alone were witnesses. The improvement in the tables of the elements of the orbits of planets, made in consequence of the establishment of the observatories of Paris and Greenwich, enabled astronomers to predict with certainty transits for the years 1761 and 1769. No other can again take place until the year 1874. The phenomenon, from its extreme rarity, is therefore one of the greatest interest in astronomy. Far greater importance had, however, been given to the phenomenon of the transit by the remark of Halley, that observations of it, made either at a single favorable position, or in remote parts of the earth's surface, afforded the best possible data for calculating the dimensions of the solar system; for, by means of them, the horizontal parallax, both of Venus and the sun, may be determined, and thence their distances, in terms of a semi-diameter of the earth, become capable of calculation in the most easy way.

The transit of 1761 was visible in Europe, and in other parts of the eastern continent. Its approach was looked for with great anxiety, and imposing preparations were made for observing it. Not only were such measures taken at the great observatories of Europe, but observers, furnished with the best instruments which the existing state of the arts would supply, were despatched to St. Helena, to the Cape of Good Hope, to Tobolsk, to Calcutta, to Madras, and to Tranquebar. The governments of France, England, Russia, and Denmark seemed to vie with each other in zeal; and no expense was spared to make the observation complete, by which the truth of the Copernican system might be brought to ocular demonstration, the laws of Kepler reduced to experimental proof, and the vast distances and dimensions of the solar system included in a problem; as simple in form as the easiest case of trigonometry. No part of the transit of 1761 was to be visible in the continent of America; but, in the island of Newfoundland, the sun would be seen to rise before the emergence of the planet from his disk. As this was the only spot in the western hemisphere, where an observation could be made, Professor Winthrop, of Harvard University, was sent to St. John's, in that island, furnished with the proper instruments by the liberal grant of the colonial Assembly of Massachusetts. In fine, wherever the transit was to be visible, and this was in every part of the civilized world except America, every amateur astronomer, as well as those who made that science their profession, endeavored, to the utmost of his means, to take advantage of the rare occasion.

Notwithstanding such imposing and costly preparations, the transit of 1761 ended in disappointing every hope. Some of the most practised observers, particularly those stationed at the great fixed observatories, lost the view altogether, in consequence of the weather; a very considerable discrepancy existed among the observations of others; and, upon the whole, the determination of the parallaxes was admitted to be inconclusive. It was indeed remarked, that, by throwing out four of the observations altogether, the rest might be made to agree, or that

the same might be done, by supposing, what occasionally happens, that each of these four observers had noted the wrong minute, in writing this element of time in front of the second marked by his clock. That this was the case, has now been established, beyond the possibility of doubt; but, to correct, in this apparently arbitrary manner, a large proportion of all the observations, which the state of the heavens permitted to be made, would hardly have been justified by any of the laws of probability.

Such an unfortunate result of the transit of 1761 served to make that of 1769 of far greater interest than had attached even to the former. The hopes of astronomers having been once frustrated, anxiety became mingled with expectation; and this anxiety was enhanced by the consideration, that but a small part of the transit of 1769 was to be visible to any of the great observatories of Europe. At Stockholm, London, Paris, Lisbon, and Madrid, the immersion might be seen just before sunset, and the emersion at Petersburg soon after sunrise on the following morning, but at no other European capital. In the northern frozen zone, beyond the latitude of sixty-seven and a half degrees, the sun was not to set on the day of the transit; the whole of the phenomenon would therefore be visible; and at Wardhuys, in Lapland, where the observation would be included between the hours of half past nine in the afternoon and three in the morning, the circumstances would be the most favorable possible. In less high northern latitudes, near the same meridian, the beginning might occur before sunset, and the end take place after sunrise. Such a position was found at Cajaneburg, in Sweden.

Maskelyne, the British astronomer royal, seeing that advantages, such as were presented by the last-mentioned places, could be secured by the comparison of observations made at two different points, one in the southern, the other in the northern hemisphere, induced his government to despatch two expeditions, the one to Hudson's Bay, the other to Otaheite. The latter was under the command of the celebrated Cook.

The French government, at the instance of Lalande,

sent Chappe to California; here the immersion was to take place when the sun was on the meridian, and, at that season, not far from the zenith.

Even at Pekin, although only the last contact was to be visible, the European astronomers of the imperial observatory were aided and excited to the task. It may be here mentioned, that a great degree of jealousy, and consequent mystery, attended the preparations of the several governments. This appears to have arisen from the arrogance of Lalande, who wished to assume the direction of the whole, and expressed his expectations that the records of the observations should be sent to him for calculation. The choice of the stations of Otaheite and Wardhuys was therefore carefully concealed from him, until it was too late for him to abandon the less favorable position of California, for another.

The position of Pennsylvania offered advantages of another description; the whole of the transit was to be visible, beginning before, and terminating after noon. It was thus to occur at hours when less disturbance was to be feared from fogs and vapors, than in the north of Europe; while the effects of the parallax, it was hoped, if less than at Cajaneburg, Otaheite, or Wardhuys, might be sufficiently marked to admit of favorable results in the subsequent calculations. At all events, it would be a subject of mortification, that so important a phenomenon, visible throughout its whole duration to the three British colonies in America, should be permitted to pass unnoticed, except by idle curiosity; while a successful observation, and the calculation of the important results, would redound to the scientific reputation of the whole of the provinces.

Such reflections did not escape Rittenhouse, and while he felt his own capacity to perform the necessary operations unaided, and had prepared with his own hands most of the more essential instruments, he showed himself unwilling to attempt to engross the whole honor, and manifested a laudable anxiety to have the means of observation so far multiplied and distributed, that the risk of failure from unfavorable weather, or any other contin-

gency, might be as much diminished as was possible. He therefore communicated to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia a calculation of the anticipated times and phenomena of the transit, as likely to be visible at Norriton, and called the attention of that learned body to the important subject. It cannot be doubted that the members of that society, who afterwards distinguished themselves by performing a part in the observation and subsequent calculations, were aware of the importance of the occasion; but the matter appears to have been first brought before them in a tangible shape by the communication of Rittenhouse; and this communication, showing them that they had in the vicinity, both many of the instruments, and an expert observer and calculator, seems to have served as a stimulus to their zeal, by exhibiting the possibility of attaining high honor, where the gratification of a laudable and enlightened curiosity had alone been thought of.

CHAPTER VIII.

Observation of the Transit of Venus.—Calculation of the Parallax of the Sun.

PREVIOUS to the year 1768, Philadelphia had not only become the seat of a highly respectable seminary of learning, which has since by gradual expansion become a thriving university; but had been chosen as the place of meeting of a scientific association, which still flourishes under the name of the American Philosophical Society. Although members of this association resided in various parts of the colonies, the intelligence of the citizens of Philadelphia gave them no ill-founded claim to the choice of their city as the scientific centre of the Union, and this choice has been justified by the share which they have taken in its proceedings and published memoirs. To this learned association the communication of Ritten-

house on the subject of the transit of 1769 was addressed. The American Philosophical Society seems to have appreciated fully the interest of the subject, and to have entered zealously into measures of cooperation. In order that preparations might be made, adequate to the importance of the occasion, a large committee was, on the 7th of December, 1768, chosen from among the members. Of this committee, Rittenhouse was one. The committee lost no time in assembling, in order to plan the most expedient mode of carrying the purposes of their appointment into effect. Three places of observation were immediately selected. The first of these was the State-house Square of Philadelphia; the second, Cape Henlopen, at the mouth of the Delaware; the third was Norriton, the residence of Rittenhouse. The charge of making the observation at Cape Henlopen was intrusted to Mr. Orren Biddle; Professor Ewing of the college, and Dr. Hugh Williamson, were appointed to the Philadelphia station; while Provost Smith and Mr. Lukens were associated with Rittenhouse at Norriton.

The proprietaries of the province, the colonial legislature, and the public institutions of Philadelphia furnished aid with great liberality to the important object. The station at Cape Henlopen was provided with an excellent telescope, as well as with timekeepers, and the instruments for rating them. A complete observatory was erected in the State-house Square, to which were assigned an equal-altitude and a transit instrument, with a great zenith sector, the property of the proprietaries; to these, a powerful reflecting telescope, furnished with a micrometer, was added by the funds granted by the legislature. Rittenhouse was left to prepare and furnish his observatory from his own resources. He had, in the autumn of 1768, commenced the construction of a proper building, which was finished in April, 1769. In this he placed a transit and an equal-altitude instrument, with a clock, all the work of his own hands. He was however without an instrument for determining his latitude; this was finally obtained by the exertions of Provost Smith from the surveyor-general of New Jersey, (Lord

Stirling,) in the form of an astronomical quadrant of two and a half feet. All that remained to be provided was a telescope of sufficient power, furnished with a micrometer. Two telescopes of less magnitude seem indeed to have been provided; but the micrometer was indispensable to a complete set of observations. Provost Smith had, however, sought at an early period for the means of supplying this deficiency; he had entered into correspondence on the subject with Mr. Penn, the proprietary, and with the British astronomer royal. In consequence of his representations, Mr. Penn purchased and sent out, for the use of the observatory at Norriton, an excellent reflecting telescope and micrometer.

The observatory at Norriton being thus at last completely provided, Rittenhouse applied himself with diligence to the necessary preparations. The distance from Philadelphia was sufficient to make it inconvenient for his colleagues on the sub-committee to render him much assistance, and they seem to have considered it unnecessary to attempt to overcome this inconvenience. Confiding in the attention and skill of their associate, they left all the preliminary observations and calculations wholly to him. These were executed in a manner which fully justified their having intrusted the whole matter to their colleague, and, when the approach of the day of the transit called them to their posts, nothing was left for them to do, but to take their seats at the telescopes provided for them.

The labor imposed upon Rittenhouse became therefore more arduous, and the responsibility greater, than was originally intended by the Society, or than he would probably have ventured to assume. Great anxiety was also mingled with the exhaustion produced by continual labor, both by day and night; for it was within the limit of possibility, that, as on the former occasion, (1761,) clouds might interfere with the observation.

The morning of the expected day, however, broke without a cloud, and not even a floating wreath of vapor appeared to interfere with the observations. Exhilarated by the favorable state of the atmosphere, and stimulated

by the near approach of the time when he was to reap the fruit of his long and patient labors, excitement supplied the place of strength. But when the contact had been observed, and the planet had entered fairly upon the disk of the sun, his bodily strength was exhausted, and he sunk fainting to the ground, unable to bear the intense feelings of delight which attended the accomplishment of his wishes. He however speedily recovered, and proceeded to perform the measures of the distances between the centres of the two bodies, at proper intervals during the continuance of the transit.

When the record of the observations made at Norriton came to be collated, not only with those of the other members of the committee of the American Philosophical Society, but with those made in different parts of the world, the practical skill of Rittenhouse shone forth in the most brilliant light; and it would have been sufficient for his fame had he added no more than this record to the science of astronomy. But he was not content with having performed more than his full share of the observation, and executed the whole of the preparatory work. The planet had hardly completed its emergence, before he set himself down to the task of calculating the parallaxes. His calculation was among the earliest that were completed, and the results were forthwith communicated to Dr. Smith, who incorporated them in a paper of his own, which was laid before the Philosophical Society. This learned body did not hesitate in undertaking the costly duty of committing this paper, with some others on the same subject, to the press, and it thus happened, that the first correct determination of the solar parallax was derived from an American source. Before a transit of Venus could be observed for the purpose, astronomers had no mode of determining the dimensions of the solar system, except by the parallax of Mars. The exact determination of the parallax of this planet is far from being easy, and thus no writer before 1761 had ventured to assign to the sun a parallax of less than $10''$. The calculations of the American committee did not make this parallax more than $8''.6$. Some time elapsed before the

record of the distant observations could reach Europe and be collated. When this was done, the calculations were made up, not by the observers themselves, but by Maskelyne in England, and Duséjour in France. The result of these calculations gave $8''.88$ for the solar parallax. When however all the observations, with the exception of the American, are brought into the calculation, the mean derived from the whole has been found to be rather below $8''.6$, than greater; and thus the results of the American observations were not only first calculated, but gave the most accurate determination.

This very accuracy of the American observations and calculations seems to have been at first injurious to their credit. Those who had long been accustomed to estimate the distance between the sun and earth at eighty millions of miles, were not prepared to have that distance suddenly increased to ninety-six millions. The highest determination which could possibly be drawn from the observations was for a time preferred as most likely to be accurate. It hence arose, that these records of the skill and science, which our countrymen exhibited more than sixty years since, are but little appreciated even among ourselves; while in Europe they are almost forgotten. Even the learned Delambre, in his account of the manner in which the dimensions of our system were determined, neglects to quote the papers of the American Philosophical Society, although he shows by a recalculation of all the other observations, that the true result is almost identical with that, which was set forth in those very papers. Of the honor to which the American Philosophical Society is justly entitled for its labors and exertions on this occasion, no small portion is due to Rittenhouse. His relative merits were fully appreciated in Europe, and he was named with the highest praise in the congratulations, which flowed in from all directions upon the society. To Franklin, who, from his official station in England, became the organ of these communications, it was declared by an accomplished judge, that no learned society in Europe could at the moment boast of a member possessing the various merits

of Rittenhouse, who united, in his own person, tact as an observer, theoretic skill as a calculator, and practical talent as a constructor of instruments.

CHAPTER IX.

Transit of Mercury.—Longitudes of Philadelphia and Norriton.—Orrery resumed.—Comet of 1770.

THE year 1769 was marked, not only by a transit of Venus over the sun's disk, but also by one of Mercury. The latter phenomenon is, however, of less interest than the former, as it is of more frequent occurrence, and could not be advantageously employed in determining the dimensions of the solar system, in consequence of the much greater distance between it and the earth. Rittenhouse observed this phenomenon also, and was assisted again by Messrs. Smith and Lukens, together with Mr. Orren Biddle, the gentleman who had observed the transit of Venus at Cape Henlopen.

This observation afforded data whence to calculate the difference of longitude between his observatory at Norriton, and the State-house Square at Philadelphia. This difference had indeed been deduced from the transit of Venus; but as the parallaxes of the sun and planet must be assumed in the calculation of the longitude, and as the longitude again enters into the calculation of the parallaxes, it was important that it should be obtained by an independent method. The observation having been made, the difference of longitude was deduced by Rittenhouse and his associates. The observations of the transit of Venus appeared to Maskelyne very important in their bearing upon a true knowledge of the dimensions of the solar system; and, as the longitudes of Norriton and the State-house Square were important elements of the calculation, that distinguished astronomer urged the

members of the American Philosophical Society to ascertain the difference between these two places, not only by every practical mode then employed in astronomy, but also in itinerary measure. The longitudes of both, from the observatory at Greenwich, would be of course ascertained in the employment of the first of these methods. These essential operations were in consequence undertaken, and performed by Provost Smith, Lukens, and Rittenhouse.

Since that period the instruments of astronomy have been vastly improved; new methods, more easy and accurate, founded on more complete tables, have been introduced; yet, for fifty years from the date of this operation, the longitude of no part of the American continent had been determined with an accuracy equal to that attained for these two places, by the operation we have referred to.

The labors preceding and attending the observation of the transit of Venus diverted Rittenhouse for a time from his mechanical pursuits. The orrery, projected in 1767, therefore remained unfinished upon his hands. No sooner, however, was this interesting subject completed, than he returned to his tools with increased zeal. Even before the orrery was finished, a contest commenced between the Colleges of Philadelphia and Princeton, to determine which should become the proprietor by purchase of this beautiful piece of mechanism. It would appear, that the former expected some favor would be shown it, either in price or in the terms of payment. Such favor, however, Rittenhouse, whose sole resources lay in his own labor, and who had already lost much time and expended much money in his attention to astronomic subjects, was not disposed to grant. It therefore became the property of the institution at Princeton, of whose cabinet it is still the pride.

We have already stated some of the important differences between this instrument and any other which bears the same name. These differences are pointed out by Rittenhouse himself in a communication to Barton, in which he imparts his original design.

“I did not,” says he, “design a machine, which should give to the ignorant in astronomy a just view of the solar system; but would rather astonish the skilful and curious examiner, by a most accurate correspondence between the situations and motions of our little representatives of the heavenly bodies, and the situations and motions of those bodies themselves. I would have my orrery really useful, by making it capable of informing us truly of the astronomic phenomena for any particular point of time; which I do not find that any orrery yet made can do.”

The instrument, as constructed in entire conformity with these views, presents three vertical faces. That in front is four feet square. In the middle is a ball to represent the sun, and around this others revolve to represent the planets. The latter move in elliptical orbits, having the former in their common focus, and at rates varying according to the law of Kepler. The orbits of the several planets are properly inclined; their nodes and the lines of their apsides are in just position, and have motions corresponding to those of the orbits of the planets themselves. The instrument being set in motion, three indices are caused to move, which point out, on graduated circles, the year, the month, and the day. The first of these extends to a period of five thousand years. In order to determine the heliocentric place of any one of the planets for any day within this period, the instrument is caused to revolve until this epoch is marked by the three indices; a small telescope is then placed upon the body of the mimic sun, and, being directed to the representative of the planet, the position of the latter may be read on a graduated circle representing the zodiac. This zodiac is not fixed, but has a motion corresponding with the precession of the equinoxes. The geocentric place is determined by affixing the same telescope to the earth, and is read off upon a circle, whose centre is the movable plane of the earth in the instrument.

The two lateral faces of the orrery have the same height with the principal one, and about half the breadth.

Upon one of them are represented the motions of Jupiter and his satellites, and of Saturn, his ring, and satellites. On the other the phenomena of the Moon's motion are exhibited, her phases, the exact time and duration of her eclipses, the appearances of solar eclipses for any given position of the earth, the Moon's longitude and latitude, the motions of her apogee and nodes. In addition, it exhibits the apparent motion of the Sun in declination, and the equation of time.

Were it not that the instrument actually exists to attest that all this has been successfully executed, it might have been believed that such varied, numerous, and complicated motions were incapable of being represented by mechanism.

The calculation of the longitude of Norriton and Philadelphia was communicated to the American Philosophical Society in August, 1770, by Provost Smith. A few days earlier than the date of this communication, Rittenhouse laid before that Association a series of observations on a comet, which was visible in June and July of that year. To the observations were appended calculations of the elements of its motion and of the figure of its orbit. In this paper he not only sustained the reputation he had acquired as a skilful observer, but showed himself capable of performing the most laborious and difficult computations of physical astronomy. The amount of labor, manual, bodily and mental, which were thus crowded into less than three years of the life of Rittenhouse, was prodigious. Other men may have indeed accomplished as much and more, by directing their energies steadily to a single pursuit. But it is probable that there is no other instance on record of such a variety of occupation having been successfully executed by a single person within so small a space of time.

CHAPTER X.

His Second Orrery.—Proposed Removal to Philadelphia.—Loan-Office Bill.—Gift of the Legislature.—Change of Residence.—Election as Secretary of the American Philosophical Society.—Second Marriage.—Proposed Public Observatory.

THE cession of the orrery to Princeton College caused, at first, no little dissatisfaction in Philadelphia. But this event, coupled with the praises that were daily pouring in from Europe, redounded in the end to the advantage of Rittenhouse, and exhibited to the inhabitants of Pennsylvania the high value of the talents and acquirements of their distinguished fellow citizen. The loss of the orrery was found to be of little moment, so long as they could command the knowledge and manual dexterity by which it had been executed; and Rittenhouse at once tendered to supply it, by making for the College of Philadelphia an exact duplicate of the original instrument. Although he offered to do this at a price inconceivably cheap, the funds of that institution were not yet adequate to the purchase. In this emergency, Provost Smith undertook to furnish what was necessary, by delivering a course of public lectures on astronomy, the profits of which were to be applied to the purpose. This undertaking was successful, the necessary funds were raised, and a duplicate of the orrery of Princeton was placed among the apparatus of the College of Philadelphia.

A just appreciation of the merits of Rittenhouse led the citizens of Philadelphia about this time (1770) to desire to withdraw him from his retirement at Norriton, and fix his residence among themselves. This could only be properly done by supplying him with means by which the difference in the cost of supporting his family, upon a well-stocked and fertile farm, and in a city, might

be compensated. Simple in his habits, and economical in his expenditure, the products of his paternal estate sufficed in a great degree for his wants, and he was enabled to afford his beautiful timekeepers at prices which gave them an extensive sale. Had he been compelled to manufacture them in the more expensive position of Philadelphia, this might not have been the case. At this moment, however, an office presented itself, which demanded a residence at the seat of government, and, calling for high integrity and much intelligence, could be performed with little labor; the emoluments would be sufficient to justify Rittenhouse in changing his abode. This post was that of one of the commissioners of the loan-office, a bill for the regulation of which was pending before the legislature of the province at their session of 1770. The commissioners were to be three in number; and, on the motion to place the name of Rittenhouse in one of the blanks left for the insertion of the names, the whole Assembly rose to vote in the affirmative. A point of etiquette was however in dispute between the Assembly and the governor, in consequence of which it appeared probable that the bill would receive his veto. It was therefore permitted by the Assembly to sleep among their unfinished business. Yet the legislature, willing to compensate him for the disappointment which he might sustain, and anxious to testify their sense of his merits, voted him at their next session a free gift of £300 currency, and in addition appropriated £400 to defray the cost of a third orrery of double the dimensions of the two former ones. This gift, which is perhaps without either precedent or imitation in the legislative annals of the country, is glorious to the body which granted it, and honorable to the party which received it. It is expressed in the resolution to be "a testimony of the high sense which this House entertains of his mathematical genius and mechanical abilities."

Rittenhouse had, before the date of this vote, namely, in the autumn of 1770, become a resident in the city of Philadelphia. This change of abode was speedily followed by a distressing event, the loss of his wife. The

affliction consequent on this bereavement appears to have interfered for a time with the activity of his scientific and mechanical pursuits, and to have caused him to meditate an expedition to Europe, which he was advised by his friends to undertake as a means of relief. It is, nevertheless, happily ordained that time mitigates the most severe dispensations of this character, and the mind of Rittenhouse speedily resumed its tone.

In 1771, the American Philosophical Society, whose meetings his change of abode enabled him to attend regularly, elected him one of their secretaries. The palmy days of that association were however at an end; the disputes between the colonies and the mother country were rapidly approaching a crisis, and the minds of men were diverted from all pursuits, except those essential to subsistence, by the all-absorbing discussions of politics. From the time of the publication of the first volume of the Transactions of this society, until the second was put to press, fifteen years elapsed, and an interval of ten years exists between the date of the latest communication of Rittenhouse in the former, and of his earliest in the latter. He did not, however, wholly neglect his scientific studies, for in 1771 we find him to have been engaged with Kinnersley in experiments on the electric properties of the gymnotus; but the four years which succeeded his removal to Philadelphia seem to have engaged him in few other pursuits than the labors of his business, with the exception of some public tasks, a part of which have already been referred to. The completion even of these was prevented by the threatening aspect of public affairs, and they did not occupy much of his time. The only other duty, which was assigned him, was that of a commissioner for rendering the Schuylkill navigable, and this was also reduced to little importance by the state of public feeling.

During this interval, Rittenhouse recovered from affliction caused by the death of his first wife, and again married. The object of his second choice was Miss Hannah Jacobs, of Philadelphia.

The year 1775 opened with a project intended to bring

the abilities of Rittenhouse more effectually into the service of science. The Philosophical Society addressed the colonial legislature of Pennsylvania, praying it to establish a public observatory, and commit it to the care of Rittenhouse. Had the circumstances of the times permitted this project to be carried into effect, it would have enabled him to occupy a great space in the history of astronomy. He had already shown himself the equal, in point of learning and skill as an observer, to any practical astronomer then living; nothing was wanting to make him rank with the Flamsteeds, the Halleys, and the Maskelynes, but that he should be permitted to devote his whole mind to this pursuit, and be furnished with those instruments and accommodations, for which no private fortune will suffice. Other men might have been found as well, nay, better qualified for the political pursuits and public offices in which it became his fate to spend the rest of his life; but America has never yet produced any individual who has manifested so great a capacity for extending the domain of practical astronomy. To arrange the details of a disorganized and depreciating currency, to collect and disburse a scanty and ill-paid revenue, were thereafter to be the pursuits of our philosopher; and he was to expend upon the estimates and returns of the tax-gatherer those powers of mind which were capable of grasping, and that mechanical skill which sufficed to imitate, the vast mechanism of the universe.

From the time at which Rittenhouse removed to Philadelphia, the minds of men had been undergoing a preparation for the parts they were to take in the ensuing contest. The inhabitants of the colonies had hitherto been remarkable for their loyalty, and, in the earlier remonstrances they presented, had appealed to a paternal sovereign from the acts of a tyrannical legislature in which they were not represented. As the crisis approached, the unanimity with which such remonstrances had been made no longer continued. Some, finding that the acts of Parliament were guided and directed by the pleasure of the monarch, unwillingly acquiesced in his sovereign will. Others, more bold, finding redress was not to be obtained

by peaceable means, sought it in resistance. Among the latter was Rittenhouse, who, in defiance of the influence of beloved relatives, enrolled himself at an early date on what became the popular side. From this period to his death, his time was principally spent in a series of public duties, some of which had reference to his favorite scientific pursuits; but others, and those the most engrossing, were wholly repugnant. If he did occasionally revert to his original profession, and the studies in which he had acquired reputation, it was at distant intervals, and rather as the recreation of leisure from other pursuits, than as the absorbing occupation of his mind.

CHAPTER XI.

His Election to the Legislature of Pennsylvania.—First Committee of Public Safety.—Treasurer of the State.—Capture of Philadelphia, and Removal of the Treasury to Lancaster.—Second Committee of Public Safety.—Transit of Mercury and Solar Eclipses.

THE residence of Rittenhouse in the city of Philadelphia, for four continuous years previous to the commencement of hostilities between the colonies and the mother country, had made him familiarly known to his townsmen. Although he did not take any active part in the public meetings and deliberative assemblies, by whose discussions the friends of the people were prepared for a resort to arms, his sentiments were not concealed; and the reputation he had acquired pointed him out as one to whom the conduct of public affairs might safely be committed in a moment of emergency. His known worth and ability speedily led to his being called to occupy a prominent position. It is a truth which all experience seems to confirm, that, if in time of profound peace the management of republics is apt to fall into the hands of

such as seek office only for their own private advantage; in the hour of war and of danger, it is most usually intrusted to those who are most capable of directing the councils and leading the armies of the nation. Our own revolution is an obvious instance, which may be cited in support of this proposition.

Franklin had been elected a member of the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania for the year 1775. From this station he was speedily called to the General Congress. Rittenhouse was immediately chosen to fill the vacant seat. To be installed as the successor of such a man was no small proof of the confidence reposed in him. This confidence he justified by the useful, if not prominent part, which he took in the deliberations of the body of which he thus became a member, at this eventful and important period.

The ancient government being speedily dissolved by the commencement of hostilities, Rittenhouse was chosen a member of the convention called for the purpose of framing a constitution; and when, by an ordinance of that convention, the provisional government was intrusted for a time to a Committee of Public Safety, composed of twenty-four members, Rittenhouse was included in that number. On the promulgation of the constitution, and the election of the officers and functionaries who were to execute it, the powers of this committee ceased; but the public duties of Rittenhouse did not terminate with the expiration of this important trust. The constitution had provided for the appointment of a State treasurer by the vote of the lower House of the legislature, and he was unanimously elected to this responsible and laborious office on the 14th of January, 1776. The appointment was for no more than a single year; but Rittenhouse continued to be annually reelected, until he declined any longer to hold the office.

Philadelphia, which had been threatened by the British forces from Jersey at the close of the year 1776, was made the object of a powerful expedition, which proceeded up the Chesapeake, in the summer of 1777. The utmost efforts of the forces of the confederation did not

suffice for the protection of the city, and it fell into the hands of the enemy in the month of September. In anticipation of the possibility of this event, the public offices were removed in haste to the borough of Lancaster, at which place the legislature was speedily convened. This body, considering the emergency of the case, and the necessity of prompt and energetic measures, not only to resist the invading enemy, but to repress the disaffected, determined to constitute again a Committee of Public Safety, to which powers the most absolute and extraordinary were given. It was authorized to proceed summarily, and even to inflict capital punishment upon all persons "inimical to the common cause of liberty and the United States of America." This committee was composed of twelve members, of whom Rittenhouse was one. It is to be recorded to the honor of this committee, that, during a time of the most highly exasperated feeling against those who were considered as Tories, no exercise of these extraordinary powers appears to have occurred, and that no individual, however obnoxious, appears to have sustained injury, either in person or property. The duties of Rittenhouse as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, and still more as presiding over a treasury of the most scanty resources, and liable to the most urgent demands, were arduous in the extreme. The pressure of these duties was aggravated by a separation from his family, and anxiety for their safety. On the approach of the enemy to Philadelphia, he had sent them to Norriton; the duties of removing the treasury from that city prevented him from joining them and making them the partners of his further flight. Even to visit them from Lancaster would have been attended with danger; for, although Norriton was without the British lines, it was not sufficiently distant to place it beyond the reach of flying parties of the enemy, and a member of the Committee of Public Safety would have been no mean prize. On the other hand, a woman and children could not venture to traverse a country exposed to the partisans of both armies.

This painful separation continued for nine months, and

the evacuation of Philadelphia was, in consequence, not less a subject of rejoicing to Rittenhouse as a patriot, than as a husband and a father.

During this period, too, he was exposed to anxiety from another cause. He had built his fame as a mechanic, and perhaps as an astronomer, upon his orrery. That at Princeton was reported to have been destroyed, and apprehensions seem to have been entertained, that the duplicate at Philadelphia might have suffered from the wantonness of a licentious soldiery. It was not until his return that this anxiety was removed. It was then found that the British commanders had respected this work of art, and had taken effectual measures for its safety. This liberal act redounds highly to the honor of Sir William Howe; and it is still more to his credit, that, after appreciating as he fully did the beauty and value of the instrument, the idea of treating it as a prize of war seems never to have occurred to him. Had he been governed by the principle, which has more recently directed the commanders of European armies, the orreries of Princeton and Philadelphia might at this time have decorated the halls of Oxford and Cambridge, for both were at different times at his disposal.

Although the anxieties of Rittenhouse in respect to his wife and children were of short duration, the war was not without painful influence upon his domestic relations. His brother-in-law, the Reverend Mr. Barton, whom we have seen as the early friend, and the assistant of the studies, of Rittenhouse, was naturally led to take an opposite side in the dissensions of the times. A native of Great Britain, and a clergyman of the Established Church, it is not to be wondered at, if he saw the cause of quarrel in a very different light from that in which it was viewed by his relative. Although neither his sacred profession nor his prudence permitted him to take any active part in the struggle, he felt a scruple of conscience, which prevented him from taking an oath of allegiance. He, in consequence, could not escape becoming obnoxious to the new government. It appears, that he was subjected to inconvenience, and perhaps put under re-

strait; at any rate it became necessary for him to leave Pennsylvania, and he was compelled to make interest for permission to retire to New York, then in the possession of the British forces. Painful as this separation must have been, it did not put an end to the personal friendship of the two relatives, who seem to have each appreciated the pureness of the other's motives. The children of Barton, who were of an age to form opinions of their own, did not partake of their father's political sentiments; their protection, therefore, devolved upon Rittenhouse. He was also the means of procuring for Barton various indulgences required by his position as an exile, from the Supreme Executive Council of the State; and these, with other good offices, were continued, until they were rendered unnecessary by the death of Barton, which took place in New York in 1780.

The astronomical pursuits of Rittenhouse were not wholly abandoned, even during this period of labor, anxiety, and danger. He found time to observe a second transit of Mercury, which took place on the 2d of November, 1776, and an eclipse of the sun, on the 7th of January, 1777. In the first of these, he was associated with his friends Smith and Lukens, and in the second with the former of these two gentlemen. On the 24th of June, 1778, the same three observers, with Mr. Oren Biddle, were engaged in the observation of an eclipse of the sun, and this within a week of the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British troops. In these observations, however, it appears by the record, that the laborious preliminaries were now performed by the other parties, and there is no trace of any calculation having been founded upon them. The relation of the parties had in fact become the reverse of what it had been at the transit of Venus; thus showing how completely his other pursuits had diverted Rittenhouse from the cultivation of astronomy, although they had not been able to conquer his taste for that interesting science.

CHAPTER XII.

Boundary Lines of Pennsylvania and Virginia.—Division Line of Pennsylvania and New York.—Demarcation of Territory reserved by Massachusetts within the State of New York.

THE pressure of a public enemy, and the obvious necessity of union in opposing him, were not sufficient to prevent internal disputes in respect to territorial jurisdiction, and property in land derived from conflicting authorities. The very rejection of allegiance to a common sovereign, by removing any authority paramount to that of the State government, seemed to aggravate the controversies; and it was even to be feared, that, in addition to acts of individual violence, States of the confederation might be arrayed against each other in open hostilities.

Among the disputes, which thus assumed a threatening aspect, was that between the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia. The line of Mason and Dixon had not been extended by them beyond the western limits of Maryland; and here another parallel became the chartered boundary in a direction from east to west, while the western limit of the grant to Penn was a line parallel to the windings of the Delaware, and was even more vague than an unexplored parallel. A wide space of country was thus covered by two conflicting claims, and settlers, holding titles under both, had entered upon the disputed territory. It so happens that within this very space are included some of the most fertile lands in the Union; and thus the pioneers of cultivation, leaping at once over the wide extent of rugged cliffs and narrow valleys of the Appalachian group of mountains, had entered upon this inviting district at a comparatively early period. Those, who held titles from the proprietaries of Penn-

sylvania, seem to have been the first to attempt to subdue this part of the wilderness; but they were speedily followed by those who claimed under the land warrants of Virginia. As no common jurisdiction was acknowledged by the two parties, ejectments were attempted, and possessions were maintained by force.

In order to bring these disputes to an amicable settlement, commissioners were mutually appointed by the two States in 1779. Rittenhouse was named first on the Pennsylvania commission, and with him were associated Professor Ewing and Mr. Bryan. On the part of Virginia were nominated the Reverend Dr. Madison and Professor Andrews. The commissioners, after a short session, agreed that the boundary between the two States should thenceforth be, an extension of Mason and Dixon's line due west to the distance of five degrees of longitude from the river Delaware, and, from the termination of this line, a meridian drawn northward to the Ohio.

The uncertainty in which the determination of a degree of longitude is necessarily involved, particularly in the absence of any astronomical investigation, was, however, such, that great doubt existed, even after the conclusion of this convention, as to the place where the appointed limit existed; and thus, although the space was narrowed, the disputes and acts of aggression were not the less violent. Such was the warmth with which the contest was carried on, that a civil war was apprehended, and Congress conceived it necessary to interpose its paternal advice, in order to avert the calamity.

The joint commission was however still continued; and, it being understood that it was to proceed, with as little delay as possible, to determine the limits by astronomical observation, and to trace them upon the ground, the knowledge that strict and impartial justice would thus be finally obtained had an irresistible influence in averting the threatening evil. The discussion was not, however, finally adjusted until after the close of hostilities with Great Britain. Up to the final settlement, Rittenhouse was retained, by successive appointments, in his office of commissioner. In this capacity, he not only

directed and partly executed the observations necessary to trace the parallel, to determine the difference of longitude, and mark out the meridian; but was compelled to enter into a variety of other questions. That the adjustment was at last made in an amicable manner, is in no small degree to be ascribed to his moderation, firmness, and acknowledged superiority in astronomical knowledge.

In this, and in all other subsequent operations of this sort in which Rittenhouse was engaged, either under the authority of his own State or that of others, he was constantly first named in the commissions, of which he in consequence became the chief. It was fortunate that the high public and political stations which he occupied entitled him at once to this preeminence, while his admitted excellence as an observer gave him on all occasions the undisputed direction of the methods calculated to produce the most authentic results. It is to this that we must ascribe, in no small degree, the ease and certainty with which many of our internal territorial disputes were settled, and the fact that no appeal has ever been made from the decisions of any commission of which he formed a part. A different policy has governed Great Britain and the United States in the adjustment of the boundary between their respective territories; and thus it has happened, that points, which might have been settled by two intelligent astronomers in the course of a few hours, and lines whose actual delineation on the ground would have occupied but a few months, have been involved by the ingenuity of professional advocates in a mist of their own creation, and have from year to year appeared more and more remote from any satisfactory conclusion.

The settlement of the boundaries of Pennsylvania and Virginia was the most important of all the commissions on which Rittenhouse served. The line was completed in 1784. The other operations of the sort, in which he was engaged, were, the division line between the States of New York and Pennsylvania, defined by the forty-third parallel of latitude, in the astronomical determination of which he spent the summer of 1786; and the

demarcation of a territory, the right of soil in which the State of Massachusetts had accepted, in lieu of a contested claim both to the land and the jurisdiction of a large part of the State of New York.

The last-mentioned duty was assigned him by the Congress of the Confederation. This body had found it necessary to interfere in order to prevent the dangerous consequences, which at one time appeared likely to flow from the dispute.

The original grant from the crown of England, under which the State of Massachusetts claimed, was limited only by the Pacific Ocean. The occupation of both banks of the Hudson river by a colony from Holland, and the conquest of this colony, had vested the settled parts of New York in the crown, by a right derived from conquest. At the close of the Revolutionary War, the State of Massachusetts claimed that this right could only be extended to the actual settlements, and that the whole of the territory west of them reverted to the holders of the prior grant. After much discussion, this State finally agreed to renounce all claim to the sovereignty, and to accept in lieu the property of a territory divided from the rest of the State of New York by a meridian line drawn northward from a point in the northern boundary of Pennsylvania, distant eighty-two miles from the Delaware river. Out of this, however, were to be left certain townships and other reservations.

The determinations necessary to set off this territory were made by Rittenhouse, and were the last operations of the kind in which he was engaged. They occupied him during a great part of the year 1787.

We have already adverted to the influence, which the fact, that many of the territorial divisions of the United States were geographical lines, capable of being determined by astronomical methods, calling neither for legal discussion, nor admitting of a just resort to arms, had upon the early destinies of our confederated republic. We can now see the important bearing, which the possession of an astronomer, of such acknowledged talent as Rittenhouse, had in the pacific adjustment of these ques-

tions. This was the more important, as every commission, on which he served, began and terminated its labors before the Confederation had derived strength from the adoption of a federal constitution, capable of enabling it to restrain those States, which might have thought it expedient to support their pretensions by arms.

CHAPTER XIII.

His Appointment as Trustee of the Loan-Office.—Retirement from Office as State Treasurer.—Private Observatory.—Commissioner to organize a Bank of the United States.—Director of the Mint of the United States.—Resignation of that Office.

DURING the performance of his duties as commissioner for running and determining astronomically the several boundary lines of which we have spoken, Rittenhouse continued to exercise the functions of treasurer of the State. In the year 1780, the office of trustee of the loan-office was also conferred upon him. To the former of these trusts he declined a reelection in the year 1789, after having held it by unanimous annual elections for thirteen years. The causes, which he assigns in his letter of resignation, are, ill health and the inadequacy of the emoluments to the labor and responsibility he incurred in the performance of the duties. During the time in which he held the office of treasurer, it was in truth one of difficulty and danger, and he was compelled to conduct it throughout in the face of a continually depreciating currency, which finally ceased to have any exchangeable value. During a part of the time, his emoluments, which were received in the form of a commission, did not admit of his employing a clerk, and he was indebted to the aid of his wife for the performance of such of his duties as required an amanuensis.

DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

In addition to the duties of his office of treasurer, his temporary appointments as commissioner of the land offices, he was placed by the legislature of Pennsylvania on several boards formed for the purpose of projecting internal improvements; and he received appointments of a similar character after he had left the treasury. The circumstances of the times were, however, little favorable to the execution of such contemplated works; and even the plans which became a matter of discussion were contracted, in consequence of the general poverty of the community. The time had not arrived when the gigantic mind of Clinton saw, in well-chosen plans of internal communication, the sure means of defraying their cost, and when the success of the New York canals demonstrated that a debt, incurred for such purposes, could never be more than a temporary burden.

His trust in the loan-office, terminated in 1790, by a law, which merged that establishment in the general treasury of the State, from which he had retired, as we have stated, during the previous year. He had, as has been mentioned before, been named in a bill introduced into the legislature of the province, at an early period of his life, for a similar trust; but this bill did not then become a law, nor was a loan-office reestablished until after the declaration of independence. The object of such offices was to supply the deficiency of a circulating medium, by granting loans to the owners of real estate, upon the security of their property, in paper money.

These bills of credit were not payable on demand, but redeemable by the payment of instalments upon the loans, and by the appropriation of the annual interest. Founded thus upon a security not readily accessible, it was a nice question, requiring the utmost skill and prudence to adjust, what amount might be safely thrown into circulation, without a risk of depreciation in the currency itself. Such depreciation did take place in many of the provinces; and it is to the varying rate of this depreciation, that we are to ascribe the original difference in the value of currencies bearing the same denominations in all the different provinces. In after-times a specie currency circulated

along with the bills of credit; and thus, while the paper might vary in value, no further change took place in the legal tender. The loan-office system not only required caution in the legislature to prevent its depreciation, but a great degree of knowledge, firmness, and moderation in its trustees; as to them was committed the task of judging of the securities offered for the loans, of calling in the several instalments, and collecting the interest; while, on the other hand, they were required, in the exercise of sound discretion, to give extensions of time, when necessary to prevent the ruin of the mortgager, or the unnecessary sacrifice of his property.

Under the administration of Rittenhouse, the State of Pennsylvania issued a large amount of bills of credit, in addition to those already in circulation; but, such was the prudence with which the loans were made, and such the indulgent firmness with which the payments were enforced, that no loss accrued to the State, nor was there any failure in their regular redemption. In fact, when the loan-office system was put an end to by a clause in the constitution of the United States, that of Pennsylvania may probably be cited as that, which had been best administered, and had, without any loss to the holders, been productive of the greatest benefit to the community. This example, however favorable in its results, is not to be quoted as justifying a mode of creating a currency, which is so liable to abuse.

It appears as if Rittenhouse, in retiring from the office of treasurer, had determined to resume, with more regularity and attention than he had at any period of his life been able to devote to it, the study of his favorite science of astronomy. For this purpose he had erected an observatory on the lot in Philadelphia, on which he also built a house for his own residence. Various circumstances and engagements, however, prevented his entering into any connected series of observations, nor was he ever able to carry his intention fully into effect. In truth, no sooner had he detached himself from the public business of the State of Pennsylvania, than he was called into the service of the general government.

Although he did not enter into such a regular course of observations as may be necessary to extend the bounds of science, he notwithstanding noted every phenomenon of interest which presented itself. Of these observations, some of the records have been published. These are, the transit of Mercury in 1789, two lunar eclipses in 1789 and 1790, and the two solar eclipses of the 8th of November, 1790, and the 3d of April, 1791. These observations are referred to by Lalande, in his great work on astronomy, and he quotes the private observatory of Rittenhouse, as the only one on the continent of America where any observations of value had been made.

The first appointment, which he held under the federal constitution, was that of commissioner for receiving subscriptions to the Bank of the United States; and, when the law establishing a national mint was passed, he had the high honor to be named by Washington as its first director. In this capacity he found himself engaged in a most arduous task. Not only were the machinery and other fixtures to be constructed, in a country where the little of mechanical skill which had once existed had expired under the pressure of a long and devastating war; but the very persons, who were to be intrusted with the most important parts of the process, were to be formed under his auspices.

With such difficulties in his way, it is sufficient for the reputation of Rittenhouse to say, that the mint of his construction continued to be adequate, without any radical change, to all the wants of the country, until a very recent period. It would be unfair to institute a comparison between it and the establishments of the same description, which have been erected or remodelled within the present century. But, if we judge it in reference to the state of the art as it existed in 1792, the mint of the United States might rank before any other in the perfection of its workmanship, and the accuracy of its processes. The beautiful coinage which will perpetuate the name of the Emperor Napoleon as surely as his victories, and the splendid specimens of art which appeared when the Bank of England resumed specie payments, had not yet been

struck, nor had Bolton applied the engine of his partner to improve and facilitate the processes of the mint.

The duties thus imposed on Rittenhouse were performed with his accustomed industry and energy. Even after the organization was complete, and every part in full operation, he pursued all the processes, and superintended all the details with unremitting assiduity. So long as his health permitted, he was daily at his post, although personal attendance was no longer absolutely necessary; and, when prevented from paying his accustomed visit, he organized a system of written reports, by which every part of the work was fully exhibited to him.

Such close and unremitting attention were unfavorable to his health. The organic disease, which had been induced in his youth by excessive attention to his mechanical and scientific pursuits, but which had been resisted by a constitution, naturally vigorous and strengthened by agricultural labors, began at length to gain upon him. He in consequence resolved to retire from this laborious office, and resigned the direction of the mint in June, 1795, after having organized and brought it into successful operation.

It appears more than probable, that, considering the depressed state of the arts in the United States at this period, had not Rittenhouse presented himself, possessing the united talents of a skilful mechanic, and a learned natural philosopher, the nation must have been compelled to resort to Europe for a person qualified to erect and set in motion this important institution.

CHAPTER XIV.

He is elected President of the Democratic Society.—Declining Health.—Death.—Character.—Literary and Scientific Honors.—Conclusion.

RITTENHOUSE lived long enough to witness the commencement of the long struggle, which divided the people of the United States into two opposing political parties. This contest began during the administration of Washington, and terminated only with the war against Great Britain. Of these two parties, the one was accused of cherishing aristocratic sentiments; the other claimed to be exclusively the friends of popular rights. It would be a needless revival of animosities, which have long since been buried, to examine into the truth of this accusation, or the justice of such an exclusive claim. Suffice it to say, that the latter of the two parties sought to increase its strength by the organization of associations under the name of *Democratic Societies*, throughout the Union.

Rittenhouse was too important a personage, both in character and station, to escape being involved in this discussion, at least in name. The Democratic Society of Philadelphia, as soon as it was formed, elected him its president. In the embittered contest which followed, these societies were accused, by their opponents, of the design of subverting all government, and of desiring to imitate the worst excesses of the French Jacobins, thus retorting the accusation, of an attempt to establish an aristocracy, and even of favoring a monarchy.

Rittenhouse did not escape being included in the accusation, with the additional charge of entering into opposition to an administration, under which he held a situation of trust and emolument. The best defence which has been made for him is limited to the statement, that his office of president was merely nominal; that he rarely

attended the meetings of the society, and that the state of his health prevented him from being aware of its tendency. To do away such excuse, he has been charged with having permitted himself to be made the tool of designing politicians. At the present day, no such defence is necessary; the principles, which the Democratic Society was formed to promulgate, have become the acknowledged rules of both the General and State governments; and, if Rittenhouse be liable to any reproach, it may be couched in terms derived from his own trade; his time-piece only went a little faster than those of his neighbors. So much of the accusation, as relates to his having arrayed himself in opposition to the administration of Washington, is answered by the fact, that his resignation of office under it was accepted with extreme reluctance.

It is, however, due to historical truth, to state, that Rittenhouse did not take any active part in the operations of this society, although he often appeared before the public as their presiding officer. He in fact continued to decline in health from the time of his resignation of the office of director of the mint, which he survived little more than a year. Rittenhouse had not only been warned by his infirmities to retire from public life, but was aware of the gradual decay of his constitution. He was sensible of the close approach of death, and prepared to meet it with philosophical firmness and Christian resignation. Although he had never united himself to any of the various sects which abound in our country, his early education had imbued him with reverence for the Christian doctrine, and his subsequent studies had impressed on his mind a conviction of the existence of a Deity. Although accused by his enemies of infidelity, he was far from being such, and sought, on the approach of his mortal disease, the consolations of religion, while his mind retained all its wonted vigor. His death took place on the 26th of June, 1796, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

The person of Rittenhouse is described as tall and slender, his temper as placid and good-humored, although capable of strong excitement. In the capacity of a husband and a father he was exemplary, and his social virtues insured him general esteem.

It is not necessary that we should state that he was industrious and energetic in the pursuit of his mechanical business, in his scientific studies, and in the execution of the various public trusts he was called to fulfil. The sketch we have given of the principal events of his life is a sufficient evidence of these points of his character.

His published works are principally contained in the "Transactions of the American Philosophical Society," in which they occupy a prominent part. They consist chiefly of the records and calculations of the astronomical observations which we have particularized, and of papers on other subjects in physical science. We have also an oration on astronomy, delivered by him before the same learned body, in 1775, and several short pieces relating to subjects of temporary interest.

Although denied in youth the advantages of a collegiate education, his reputation earned for him honorary degrees, not only from the University of Pennsylvania, but from other literary institutions in the United States. Of the University of Pennsylvania he was long a useful and active trustee, and held for a time the appointment of professor of astronomy. He was also chosen an honorary member of the only learned association, other than the American Philosophical Society, which had been formed in the United States previous to his decease. Of the American Philosophical Society, he was in succession an active and distinguished member, secretary, vice-president and president. In the last office he succeeded Franklin, and was followed by Jefferson. More than one foreign society of the highest reputation solicited the honor of enrolling him as an associate; and towards the close of his life he received the highest mark of distinction, which the scientific world at that time acknowledged, in being chosen a foreign member of the Royal Society of London.

In order that the value of this compliment may be fully appreciated, it may be necessary to explain, that, as the Royal Society derives no direct endowment from the government, it is principally supported by the pecuniary contributions of its fellows. Among them, we therefore find not only names of distinction in science, and of those

who take an active part in its transactions, but of those who are qualified only by birth, station, or fortune, united to a desire to promote the interests of learning. For the same reason, this society does not refuse to enrol among its ordinary fellows, foreigners of fair scientific reputation, who, like the subjects of Great Britain, are required to contribute to its funds. In this capacity, a considerable number of Americans have been chosen fellows. To be permitted to use this title, and have at the same time the privilege of increasing the funds by which the publications of the society are effected, is no small honor; as such, it is eagerly sought, and highly valued. But, when the Royal Society chooses to elect a foreign member, this choice imports, that it has sought to confer honor upon itself by placing on its list, without receiving any pecuniary equivalent, a name already distinguished, and likely to be celebrated in the history of science. Such was the reputation of the Royal Society at the time this honor was conferred upon Rittenhouse, that it was the proudest distinction which a man of science could attain, and would have been the fit reward of a life spent in the pursuit of physical learning.

We have thus traced the subject of our memoir from his birth in an obscure part of a newly-reclaimed wilderness, under circumstances which denied him many of the usual advantages of education, until, by the force of industry, talents, and genius, he had reached the acme of scientific honor. Our task is therefore concluded, and will have been successfully performed, if it shall only recall to his countrymen the memory of a name, which engrossing pursuits of a very different character from those in which its celebrity was acquired, have caused them in some measure to forget, or to regard with no due reverence; and if we shall have been able to assert for him the right of priority in scientific discoveries and researches, of which others have reaped the honors.

A GLOSSARY

OF THE LATIN, FRENCH, AND OTHER NOT-EASILY-UNDERSTOOD WORDS AND PHRASES.

Abattis, (French term,) rubbish, confusion, piles of trees or branches, felled and sharpened, and laid with the points outward, so as to impede the progress of an enemy.

Aboard, (old spelling,) aboard, on board.

Aurati, gilt, or gilded, or decked with gold.

Banketted, (old spelling,) banqueted.

Bateau, (plural *Bateaux*.) the French name for boat; particularly applied to large, light, flat-bottomed boats, much used in Canada, and on the upper lakes.

Berth, or *Birth*, the room or apartment in which any number of the officers or ship's company *mess* and reside. Also applied to the box or place, at the side of the cabin, in which they sleep.

Boston Tea Party, a term sometimes applied to the exploit of destroying the Tea in Boston harbor, at the commencement of the Revolution.

Bourdeyn, (old spelling,) burden.

Bull, *Papal*, see *Papal Bull*.

Bunk, a word in common use in some parts of the United States, applied to a box or case of boards for a bed.

Cable-tier, the place, on board of a vessel, where the cables are coiled away.

Calculus, a department of mathematics, the science of fluxions.

Cereal, relating to corn. Cereal plants are the several kinds of grain.

Cheveaux de frise, (French military term,) rolling cylinders filled with pikes; stakes sharpened at each end, and fastened by the middle across each other, or set into spars, so as to point all ways, to stop up breaches, and prevent the approach of cavalry.

Cincinnati, a name derived from the Roman general Cincinnatus, and adopted by a society established at the close of the Revolutionary War, by the officers of the disbanded Army, for the purpose of friendly intercourse, keeping up old associations, and aiding each other when in need.

Continental Congress, the name by which the Congress of the United Colonies was designated under the old Confederation, and previously to the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. *Provincial Congress*, a convention of Delegates of a particular State.

Council-of-War, a council held by the officers of an army, when the commander wishes the counsel and advice of his subordinates.

Coup de main, (French term,) a military expression, denoting an instantaneous, sudden, unexpected attack upon an enemy.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, It is delightful and glorious to die for one's country.

Effigies Seb. Caboti filii Joannis Caboti militis aurati. As will be seen by the text, where this inscription occurs, (p. 121,) there is an ambiguity in the application of the last two words. The other part of the inscription, may be rendered, "the portrait (or likeness) of Sebastian Cabot, of England, son of John Cabot." *Miles*, or *militis*, means, literally, a warrior, or soldier, or officer of the army; and in the English law, sometimes indicates a knight. *Auratus*, or *aurati*, means gilt, gilded, or decked with gold. *Eques* means a horseman, or knight, who was frequently called *eques auratus*, because, anciently, none but knights were allowed to beautify their armor, and other habiliments, with gold.

En masse, in a body, in the mass, altogether.

Eques, and *Eques auratus*. See *Effigies*.

Fascine, (pl. *fascines*,) a bundle of fagots, or small branches of trees, or sticks of wood, bound together, for filling ditches, &c.

Formula, (pl. *formulae*,) a prescribed form or order.

Geodetic, relating to the art of measuring surfaces.

Gramina, grasses.

Green Mountain Boys, a term applied, during the Revolutionary War, to the inhabitants of Vermont, (Green Mountain,) particularly those who were in the army.

Gymnotus, the electric eel.

Habeas Corpus, "you may have the body." A writ, as it has been aptly termed, of personal freedom; which secures, to any individual, who may be imprisoned, the privilege of having his cause immediately removed to the highest court, that the judges may decide whether there is ground for his imprisonment or not.

Hipparchus, a celebrated mathematician and astronomer of Nicæa, in Bithynia, who died 125 years before the Christian era. He was the first after Thales and Sulpicius Gallus, who found out the exact time of eclipses, of which he made a calculation for 600 years. He is supposed to have been the first, who reduced astronomy to a science, and prosecuted the study of it systematically.

Loyalists, Royalists, Refugees, and Tories. In the times of the Revolution, these terms were used as technical or party names, and were sometimes applied indiscriminately. Strictly speaking, however, *Loyalists*, were those whose feelings or opinions were in favor of the mother country, but who declined taking part in the Revolution; *Royalists*, were those who preferred or favored, a kingly government; *Refugees*, were those who fled from the country and sought the protection of the British; and *Tories*, were those, who actually opposed the war, and took part with the enemy, aiding them by all the means in their power.

Magnetic Variation, a deviation of the needle in the mariner's compass, from an exact North and South direction.

Master-at-arms, an officer appointed to take charge of the small arms in a ship of war, and to teach the officers and crew the exercise of

- the same ; to see that the fire and lights are extinguished at proper hours, take charge of prisoners, &c.
- Miles*, or *militis*, and *militis aurati*. See *Effigies*.
- Mountaineers*, inhabitants of the mountains, particularly applied, in this volume, to the Green Mountain Boys, *which see*.
- Novus Orbis*, the New World, the title of an old book relative to America.
- Orthographic*, relating to height or elevation,—*orthographic projection*, a delineation or drawing representing the elevation of an object.
- Papal Bull*, a brief, or mandate, or proclamation, issued by the Pope ; so called from its being sealed with the bulla, a leaden or golden seal.
- Partisan*, the commander of a party or detachment of troops sent on a special enterprise ; one able in command, dexterous in obtaining intelligence, intercepting convoys, and annoying an enemy in all possible ways.
- Pinesse*, (old spelling,) a pinnace, a small vessel, navigated with oars and sails.
- Posse* and *Posse Comitatus*, the power of the county, the assistants of the sheriff or magistrate in supporting or enforcing the law.
- Precession of the Equinoxes*, a slow annual motion of the equinoctial points, (or points where the ecliptic crosses the equator,) by which they change their place, going from east to west, or backwards.
- Prisoners of War*, prisoners taken in war.
- Promontorium*, a headland jutting into the sea, a promontory, or cape.
- Provincial Congress*, see *Continental Congress*.
- Provincials*, a term applied, in the time of the Revolution, to the soldiers of the American army, the States then being termed Provinces.
- Provost-jail*, a common jail, under the care of an officer called a provost, or provost-marshal.
- Rangers*, a corps of soldiers, acting independently of the line of the army, and selected for their prudence, sagacity, and alertness, and their skill in ranging about the country wherever their services were needed. "They were employed in many perilous duties ; reconnoitering the positions of the enemy, serving in the capacity of guides, surprising detached parties, and obtaining prisoners, in order to gain intelligence by force or stratagem." "They rendered most valuable aid as scouting parties, to watch the movements of the enemy," in times of difficulty and danger, when such services were hazardous in the extreme. See p. 246, of this volume.
- Reconnaissance*, examination, recognisance ; an examination or reconnoitering of the situation and condition of an enemy's encampment.
- Refugees*, see *Loyalists*.
- Regulars*, troops of a regular or permanent army, in contradistinction to militia. In the times of the Revolution, this term was applied exclusively to the soldiers of the British army.
- Royalists*, see *Loyalists*.
- Rudolphine Tables*, a celebrated set of astronomical tables, published by Kepler, and named in honor of the emperor Rudolph, or Rudolphus.

Scouting Parties, parties sent out from an army to observe the motions of the enemy.

Scute or *Skute*, a boat or small vessel.

Seven Years' War, the war between Great Britain and France, which commenced in 1754, and grew out of the struggle between the British and French for the possession of North America.

Sive, otherwise, or.

Squaw, an Indian woman.

Tea Party, Boston, see *Boston Tea Party*.

Tomahawked, struck with a tomahawk, an Indian weapon shaped something like a hatchet.

Tories, see *Loyalists*.

Tyburn, a noted place for the execution of criminals, in London. It was occupied for this purpose, in the middle of the twelfth century, and continued to be so, till the year 1783, a period of six centuries and a half. It derived its name from a *burn* (or brook) called *Tye*.

Wampum, strings of shells, used by the Indians as money, and also made into belts and presented as tokens or symbols of friendship to strangers or those with whom they were in treaty.

Watchet, pale blue, or sky-colored cloth.

Ultima ratio, the last reasoning, the final appeal or resort to decide a controversy. The cannon's mouth is said to be the *ultima ratio regum*—the last resort (or reasoning) of kings.

END OF VOL. II

4 -



